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THE BEAR FACTS

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BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

APRIL 2011

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IN SHORT

TMSCA state champs

With a team of only five students, BCS won first place in the TMSCA state meet in San Antonio on April 9. Competing against students from both public and private schools, Brentwood scored 3,365 points; the second-place school had 2,637. Seventh-graders Andrew Armstrong, Brendan Hollaway, and Joshua Sass were joined by eighth-grader Michael Lam and sixth-grader Gabie Nguyen. The team traveled to the meet from Abilene, where they had played key roles in leading the BCS junior high to its first-ever sweepstakes trophy at TCSIT.

Busy bands

The BCS bands have concerts and events lined up for the duration of the school year, as director Travis Pollard seeks to bring new opportunities to his students. Upcoming performances include the spring all-level concert on April 21, Village Christian Apartments on May 3, "Way Off Broadway" on May 6-7, "Jazz Under the Stars" on May 12, and a performance at Schlitterbahn's "Sound Waves" on May 21. Band camp in the new building will be Aug. 1-5.

JH Spiritual Emphasis

"God's Story, My Story" is the theme of this year's Spiritual Emphasis Day for junior high, which is being held at Westover Hills Church of Christ today, April 15. As they did last year, students will spend some worship time together in addition to their various small-group sessions. Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth, who is organizing the event with Tere Hager, said the theme verse is Ephesians 2:10, and students are challenged to examine how God speaks and is represented in their lives.

Junior high takes first-ever TCSIT title

High school settles for second; younger students rule math events

carter **BOYD**
reporter

From the moment the first BCS vehicles rolled onto the Abilene Christian University campus last week, other students' knees began to knock and their hands began to tremble. High school and junior high students who had come from all across Texas knew what Brentwood's arrival meant: There was now a higher chance of them not placing first.

Since they won their first high school sweepstakes trophy in 1994, Brentwood Christian has been a frontrunner in the Texas Christian Schools Interscholastic Tournament, an academic and dramatic competition for private Christian schools. But until this year, their reputation as a Goliath has chiefly come from efforts of the high school students rather than those in junior high. High school has won the sweepstakes 13 times; junior high, never.

But this year the roles reversed. High school finished a close second, while the junior high won first by a landslide. Brentwood's secondary students brought home both a first and second place trophy, which has only happened one other time in Brentwood's 26 years at TCSIT.

As they often do, this year's participants faced the obstacle of having the TAPPS state-level choir competition on the same weekend as TCSIT, meaning a number of students who

typically participate in TCSIT were unable to do so. Also, Brentwood suffered the loss of several outstanding now-graduates, such as Matthew Gardner, who won first place in five events last year.

"We did the best we have ever done," said elementary principal and TCSIT coordinator Dr.

Libby Weed. "The timing of TAPPS choir really hurt us; we lost a lot of people. I'm just very proud of those who stepped in and picked up for having lost Matthew and other star students."

Of the almost 70 students from Brentwood

see **TCSIT**, page 4



photo: Kaleen Graessle

Whoop whoop Brentwood's high school and junior high TCSIT teams pose in triumph after a near-perfect trip in which the junior high won first place.

R.I.P., junior high; BCS to pull sixth grade into middle school

lanae **HOLLINGSWORTH**
reporter

Middle school is coming. Next year Brentwood Christian will be switching from the current elementary/junior high model to an elementary/middle school model.

The change will be evident in many ways, from having four separate chapel services a week to more frequent pep rallies. The administration met with parents in the auditorium on March 22 to announce the decision and give them opportunities to voice concerns and ask questions.

Sixth grade has been part of the elementary school since the 1980-81 school year when BCS first expanded to that level. At that time research and observation indicated that it was better for 12-year-olds to be in a secure, self-contained environment. The administration also felt that it was wise to refrain from what has been called the "hurried child syndrome." At last month's meeting, elementary principal Dr. Libby Weed assured the parents that with

the changes that will be coming, the top priority is still a secure environment for the children to learn and grow.

Through the years the Austin-area school districts have changed, and after more research, observation, and prayer the administration has decided that it will be more beneficial to both the students and school to move to a middle school model.

President Marquita Moss told parents the switch is being made for many reasons, based on several years of observation and research by the administration. First, almost all public and private schools and youth groups function around a middle school model, and aligning with these would be easier on everyone.

Second, Moss said children tend to mature faster now, leaving sixth graders with more in common with seventh and eighth graders.

Also, children in the middle years need identity. Moss explained this issue at the parent meeting.

see **MIDDLE SCHOOL**, page 4

Choir wins first in state for 6th time

joseph **KANG**
reporter

Despite missing a quarter of its members, Brentwood Christian's high school choir took first place from among 17 schools in the TAPPS 3A state vocal competition on Friday, April 8, in Belton. It was Brentwood's sixth state championship since 2003, but the first since 2008.

Eleven soloists earned the top rating from judges, as did all three sight readings and several ensembles. Choir director Missy Weaver said she was proud of how well her students did in sight reading.

"It's one of my favorite events," she said. "I feel like we sang with confidence, and

see **CHOIR**, page 3

Bretz knows best: Gabriel Breternitz

Senior trip a unique and valuable life experience

Candide, the protagonist in Voltaire's famous satire of the same name, makes this remark to his trusted traveling companion after seeing the glories of the fabulous foreign land, El Dorado: "Certainly, a man should travel."

Twenty of my peers and I spent our spring break on a ten-day journey that took us through four iconic cities: Rome, Florence, Paris, and London. We saw sights that we'd previously only read about in books, and we walked where giants of the past once walked. After an experience like that, how could we return unaffected? Candide was dead on.

One thing that struck me as particularly astonishing was the way every city we visited was practically saturated with high art or historic architecture. In Rome, we stayed in a hotel a block away from the Coliseum, which was itself a block away from Il Vittoriano, a massive monument to Italy's re-unification. The Vittoriano also contained the tomb to Italy's unknown soldier along with an eternal flame, but I most remember it for being too large and extravagant to fit in one picture. A mere block from the Vittoriano was the Roman Forum, a huge area full of excavated Roman ruins. Among those ruins was Trajan's Column, which is a tower 125 feet high built nearly 1900 years ago. All this within a couple blocks of our first hotel on the first day!

The overabundance of art didn't stop there – far from it. The Vatican was the most golden place I'd ever seen. The interiors of St. Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel were almost impossible to comprehend. In Florence, we saw the Duomo, an immense chapel whose exterior was covered in pink, green, and white slabs of marble, as well as Michelangelo's famous David statue. In Paris, we toured the Louvre and the Notre Dame Cathedral; in London we toured St. Paul's Cathedral and saw Rodin's Thinker in passing. These are just highlights – if I tried to articulate everything we saw I'd fill the whole newspaper. The artistry of the cities extended to the smallest of things; even the balconies of apartment buildings contained intricate carvings.

However, the grandeur of seeing all these magnificent things was made even greater by sharing the experience with my friends. That, above all other reasons, is why I would recommend going on the senior trip.

A lot of my favorite memories are simply about exploring the new and unfamiliar surroundings with a group of friends. I remember walking the streets of Rome and becoming almost hopelessly lost, but miraculously finding our way back thanks to James "The Human GPS" Rambin. I remember staying up late laughing and joking with my friends on the overnight train, which we dubbed "The Space Station." I remember a relaxing day trip to Greenwich Park to visit the Observatory and see the city of London from higher ground.

Other memories are great because of the shared experience of seeing an iconic sight or image. The Eiffel Tower at night was mystifying and romantic; it was lit beautifully and would periodically sparkle. My group took a boat ride on the Seine River that allowed us

to see Paris the way we'd imagined it: beautifully. (This was in stark contrast to Paris by day, which was disappointingly too much like a normal big city, covered in graffiti and trash.)

Traveling with your buddies also converts potentially annoying experiences into opportunities for laughter. Nearly everywhere we went, we were accosted by the street vendors' signature call of "Hey, playboy!" But rather than get irritated, we indulged them and made a game of haggling their prices down for fun. Of course, we were the ultimate losers in this game since the vendors still managed to sell us their junk, but that junk at least made a decent souvenir; some people still wear their colorful necklaces and bracelets which they got for "free" in Pisa – free with a two-euro gratuity.

One final note: Although the trip was memorable for seeing the sights and spending quality time with my friends, it would still be worth it even without those things so long as I still got to see "Les Misérables" performed at Queen's in London. There is no way to properly describe how moving and dramatic a performance it was; even if you hate musicals, this one will rend your heart. It is tied with the Seine River boat ride as my favorite, most European-feeling trip memory.

Returning home was bittersweet; after ten days of exhaustive touring, the rest and relaxation that home promised was very appealing. However, the senior trip was such a new and different and, frankly, wonderful experience that having it come to an end felt almost tragic. I understand Candide's feelings now; after seeing the riches and beauty offered by foreign land with my trusted traveling companions, how else can I respond except with that singular remark: Certainly, indeed, a man should travel.

Mike's Musings: Mike Lee

Sports enrich life for jocks, couch potatoes

Previously in the Bear Facts, the reporter who's "large and in charge" – Kia Khadem – made statements ridiculing sports.

Perhaps he thinks it childish for a horde of muscular machos to exhaust themselves over a round object. Maybe he has a problem with grownups wearing uniforms like school kids do, or with the fact that they respond to a whistle like his pet does. And he most certainly doesn't like the fact that professional athletes make much more money than he likely will.

So, the grand solution Kia proposes over sports is watching more television; however, as a person whose favorite channel is Fox Soccer Channel, I feel obliged to take a stand for sports in general.

Why play sports? The benefits of playing sports are so obvious and numerous that I can direct you to Barnes and Noble. However, for the benefit of people like our beloved reporter who missed the obvious, I shall begin by taking the trouble to state them.

First of all, it's good for your health. The most advanced method to keep you in shape is to use your body, and sports is the most popular and accessible way of doing that.

Second, sports are also a great way to learn commitment. While not everyone understands its importance, nobody can achieve anything out-of-the-ordinary without it. Undertaking physically and mentally demanding training is a natural way to build commitment.

Lastly, recent research suggests sports are helpful for developing math skills. So playing sports can be thought of as a fun way to study America's least favorite subject.

Although not as obvious, there also are health benefits even if you don't participate in sports, if you follow these simple steps: watch sports, and have fun.

There's very simple reasoning behind my claim. Whether you stand in a stadium with 50,000 people or you scream alone while watching ESPN, the sight of your team stunning the opponents at the last minute – with a buzzer beater, touchdown, or home run, or even a heavy upper cut – excites you and your pituitary gland, which in turn releases adrenaline, more specifically epinephrine, into your blood and increases your heart rate. Occasional surge of adrenaline is beneficial for the health of most people, and more so if you are a student who doesn't get much action outside of Mr. Moore's English class.

We need sports – the world does. Historically, men have not seen a more effective ice breaker. It has been through positive competition in sports that many people worldwide have overcome racial prejudice. While there is "black music," there are no "black sports" or "white sports." Even the Cold War could not freeze sports, and one of the United States' most successful tactics against the war on communism was "Ping Pong Diplomacy."

see LEE, page 7

THE BEAR FACTS

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The Bear Facts is published monthly by the journalism classes of Brentwood Christian High School. 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.



photos: Kaleen Graessle

Ten hut Twenty-one eighth-grade students pose in front of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Washington, D.C., which they visited along with many other historic places as part of their spring break trip. This was the first group to tour without traditional tour guide Larry Amman, who died of cancer over Christmas break.

Center for Science and the Arts on target for July completion

elena **BATLLE**
reporter

While science teacher Kristen Berry gives one of her crazy lessons to her chemistry students, some daze off into a teenage unknown in their new spacious chemistry classroom. Numerous

open windows reveal the surrounding trees, bringing a tranquil and open atmosphere.

Next door, Juliana Ewing is trying to motivate her AP Biology students, while they all enjoy more space and better equipment for their class experiments.

Leaving the west wing and crossing through

the spacious auditorium in the center of the new building, students will be heard reciting lines on a great stage, while director Cindy Singleton continuously reminds them to not forget to memorize those lines.

Continuing into the east wing, you'll slowly hear music enter your ears. It may be voices from choir teacher Missy Weaver's long-awaited new space, or it could be an array of instruments from the classroom of band director Travis Pollard, whose musicians will be far away from any students attempting to study.

These are the possible sights and sounds of Brentwood Christian's up-and-coming Center for Science and the Arts.

Science teachers will not only have new and spacious classrooms, they also have storage rooms where they will keep all the chemicals and supplies for their experiments and a new room to perform those experiments. The new choir and band rooms

cannot compare to the cramped classrooms they have used for nearly three decades. They will also have office space and storage rooms for instruments and choir uniforms.

"It's really great," Berry said. "All the teachers who are going to move there are really excited to be in well-equipped rooms."

According to BCS president Marquita Moss, current work is focused on completing the exterior and installing the heating and air conditioning systems on the inside.

"Construction is moving along at a fast pace," she said. "Every day brings exciting progress."

She described the construction site as "a bevy of activity, with crane operators, painters, heating and air conditioning contractors, electricians, and others working side-by-side."

Moss said the construction is still expected to be completed by July, in time for the new school year and for the production of "The Sound of Music."

Students who plan to spend time in the new building next year are excited.

"It's a great opportunity, especially for younger actors like me, to be on an actual stage," sophomore Niky McCaffety said. "We learn how to use more space, something you can't do with the old stage, and for the theater electives, we get to learn and experience much more."

Moss said she is working hard trying to raise the rest of the funds needed to complete the theater portion of the building.



Almost completed Periodic glances at the new Center for Science and the Arts reveals the quick rate of progress. BCS president Marquita Moss said she still expects construction to be completed by July.

Art takes fourth in state; wonders what might have been

carter **BOYD**
reporter

In a difficult struggle at the TAPPS state meet on March 25 and 26, Brentwood Christian's art students fought valiantly and brought home a fourth-place trophy. But according to art teacher Lori Morin, BCS could have easily placed first.

In the past, BCS has never placed higher than fourth, and Morin said the competition this year was intense. She and her students said they were glad to have done so well, but disappointed not to have done better.

Morin said the artwork in TAPPS 3A was some of the best she had seen, and that the competition among the 38 participating schools was very tough. The most impressive – and in some ways, disappointing – thing about the competition was the margin of points between Brentwood and a big trophy. Nine points separated BCS from first place, a virtually insignificant amount. A single student placing second in a single event is awarded eight points. A first-place prize in any event is worth 10 points.

Senior Honney Khang, one of Brentwood's strongest artists, was sick on the day of the

see **ART**, page 5

New store "Bear Necessities" opens with roar

matthew **ARCHER**
reporter

The first-ever Brentwood store, Bear Essentials, is now open for business. The store officially opened on April 4 with a 20-percent-off sale on all uniform items that continues until the end of April. It is located in the secondary building in room C111, which was formerly David Peyton's room.

The store had a "soft opening" on Thursday, March 31, during the spring open house. Parents were able to get a first glance at all the uniforms, school supplies, and snacks being sold at the store.

In the weeks prior to the opening, teacher Linda Pimentel's husband Bob helped out by painting the room and doing repairs. Then a team

from CFj, Brentwood's new uniform supplier, came down from Fort Worth with inventory. With the help of BCS parent Pam Heins, who is currently employed by CFj and working as store manager, they set up chairs and racks and helped transform the room from a classroom into a fully functional store. It includes a changing room, racks of uniforms, snacks ranging from yogurt to small cookies, and small school supplies such as pencils and paper.

So far the general opinion of students concerning the store has been positive. Students have suggested improvements like adding individual price tags to items, and most students agree that the store could use more food.

"I love it," senior Derek Tresslar said. "I think it's really great that whenever I run out of

Choir takes TAPPS 3A state title; moves to new building in fall

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that really shows a lot to the judges."

According to Weaver, however, the choir struggled with large ensembles because they were missing so many people, leaving some vocal parts with only one or two people in them. The choir was missing 14 of its 57 members, since Brentwood's participation in TCSIT was once again on the same weekend as the choir's competition.

Large ensembles sang three songs each;

sacred ensembles sang two songs, and small ensembles and soloists sang one song.

Weaver said the judge's comments are always the same: "a unified vowel sound."

"It is something we work on all the time. But it's hard to compete against a radio pop sound that many students have so naturally because that is what they are used to listening to and singing along with," she explained. "Choral singing is different, and I'm trying to create new habits with them."

The spring choir concert is scheduled for April

school supplies or need a quick snack I can just run over there and get it."

The store is currently run by the Mustard Seed project, the program to help put money into Christian education by selling uniforms and giving back the profits to the schools, which is headed by parent organization CFj.

In the beginning stages the store will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., as store officials try to find the times with most interest.

"It's just a brand new idea and we're trying to figure it out," said Linda Pimentel, who is a long-time friend of CFj CEO Sharon Evans and has been volunteering much of her time with the Mustard Seed Project. "It is just kind of a dream, or something to get funds into Christian schools so they can be solvent and offer Christian education for their kids."

26. Choirs will also perform at Grandparents' Day on May 6 and Baccalaureate on May 22.

Next year, the choir will move into its new home in the Center for Science and the Arts.

"This is a great time at Brentwood, as we watch the fine arts programs grow larger and more accomplished each year," Weaver said. "I encourage anyone who has a desire and passion for singing to try out for the choir. If you are a part of the group, you will grow as a musician, be challenged as a singer, and develop great friendships and memories!"

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Immad Qussad

Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2011.

Fragrant friend sings, lifts weights, shoots hoops

kailey **RODDEN**
reporter

When senior Immad Qussad wakes up for school, he prepares himself for the busy day ahead. As he puts on his favorite cologne Curve, he gets ready to face challenges like AP Calculus and AP English daily. Along with academics, the homecoming king finalist adds a number of extracurricular activities to his to-do list. With his deep voice being used for Encore and his muscular arms being used in basketball and weight lifting, Immad is always a main player at Brentwood Christian School.

Immad was born in Austin on Sep. 30, 1992, and began attending Brentwood in kindergarten. Born to a Jordanian father and Hispanic mother, he is the oldest of three siblings; eighth-grader Yara and third-grader Elias are also at BCS.

As a child, Immad liked to watch Power Rangers and enjoy his favorite food of filet mignon with fettuccine alfredo. Teachers say that as a young student, Immad was very much like he is now: respectful, quiet, and hard-working. Years ago he was referred to by some elementary teachers as an “Immad-el student.”

Today, he remains self-motivated and independent. He has always been a leveling influence in the classroom, and many teachers say he is very attentive and ready to participate in discussions.

“Immad always tried to do his best,” his fourth-grade teacher Jodie Coyle says. “He was

mature in the fact that he knew when to be silly with his friends and when to be serious and pay attention. He was a leader in his ability to not let others persuade him from doing what’s right.”

It seems as though Immad is a part of almost every aspect of student life at BCS. When he is not performing for an audience, he is usually there to cheer on his classmates. His favorite

Years ago he was referred to by some elementary teachers as an “Immad-el” student.

activities include singing and playing sports, and he is very active in the two. Since his freshman year, Immad played shooting guard and point guard for the basketball team, played outfield in baseball, played forward in soccer, has been in all the BCS musicals, and has sung bass in Encore and choir.

“Immad is a great young man who is very mature,” varsity basketball coach Brandon Tatum says. “I truly enjoyed coaching him and will miss him greatly when he graduates.”

Underneath Immad’s quiet, respectful, and almost meek demeanor is a very outgoing person. Often seen laughing with friends in the hallways, Immad does not hesitate to hand out a big white smile or a hug to passersby.

“He’s great to be with when you’re really excited about something,” says basketball teammate and fellow Encore member Brian Peterson. “Celebrating with him is the best time to hang out. If you’re really pumped about something, he’s excited with you.”

Unafraid to try new things, Immad often takes part in off-the-cuff activities with his friends. In last year’s talent show, he took part in a whistling troupe. The group took the coveted first prize after whistling the song “Don’t Stop Believing” by Journey.

Immad also takes care of his appearance. He works out every day, always smells good, and takes care of his hair. In fact, during his freshman year, Immad got a perm.

“He’s a man’s man,” fellow basketball player Brett Withem says. “He’s really independent and does what he wants. He’s not influenced by others.”

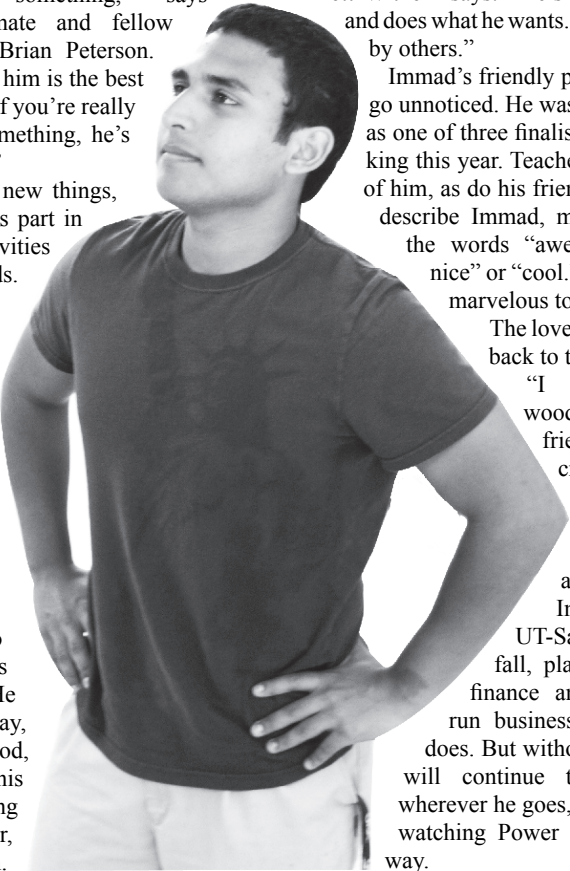
Immad’s friendly personality does not go unnoticed. He was voted by his peers as one of three finalists for homecoming king this year. Teachers all speak kindly of him, as do his friends. When asked to describe Immad, many students used the words “awesome” or “super-nice” or “cool.” Teachers find him marvelous to teach.

The love for Immad is given back to the school as well.

“I love Brentwood because of the friendships that are created from being here,” Immad says.

“The bonds you form with people are incredible.”

Immad is going to UT-San Antonio in the fall, planning to major in finance and and eventually run businesses like his father does. But without a doubt, Immad will continue to stay a leader wherever he goes, smelling good and watching Power Rangers along the way.



Middle school to bring students “identity”

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“We have found that students in the middle years sometimes feel like ‘neither fish nor fowl’ – caught in the middle of elementary and high school without a strong sense of identity of their own,” Moss told parents. “We believe that a positive sense of identity as a group would be a great benefit to them.”

Last, it should be better for the admissions office, because other schools have breaks after fifth and eighth grades, and transferring into BCS would be easier if the breaks aligned. In addition, the school would like to have a strong feed-in for high school, as recognized two years ago when an additional section of sixth grade was temporarily added.

Such a significant change presents a variety of logistical concerns. In the fall administrators met with 10 middle-level teachers to begin addressing these issues. Six committees were then formed to discuss things such as schedules, room assignments, and academics.

The faculty was able to ask questions and present concerns about this change to the administration at the faculty retreat in January. When the decision was announced to parents of fourth, fifth, and sixth graders in March, Weed detailed the changes that would take place this year. Fifth graders were briefed of the change the next morning, and a school-wide announcement was posted on RenWeb. At the spring open house on March 31, an

announcement was made to all BCS families.

“It’s exciting and I’m glad we get to do it,” fifth-grader Emily Witcher said.

Even with many unknowns in their futures, fifth graders were excited about the coming change. Reasons for the excitement varied from to having a study hall or being able to walk around during the day to lockers and more opportunities.

“It will probably be better because I might get a locker, and I need a locker,” fifth-grader Tara Whitaker said.

The impact of this decision is already being felt. Sixth graders were integrated into junior high hall singing on March 28. They are also being allowed the freedom to sit by their friends at lunch and to use the high school library computers for research.

More significantly, there will be a double graduation ceremony, with both fifth and sixth graders graduating on May 25 and entering middle school in the fall.

Some decisions have already been made for next year. BCS will have four chapels: Monday for kindergarten through second grade; Tuesday for grades 3-5; Thursday, high school; and Friday, middle school. Math Command will end after fifth grade. Sixth grade schedules will be similar to those of seventh and eighth graders.

Another change that will impact the secondary student body will be the format for Brentwood’s National Honor Societies. NEHS

will be fourth and fifth grades, and sixth grade will be a qualifying year for NJHS, which will be for seventh and eighth grades. Ninth grade will be a qualifying year for NHS, which will continue to be tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades.

There are many unknowns about athletics, but BCS will continue to have a fifth-grade team, a sixth-grade team, and seventh- and eighth-grade mixed teams. To help boost identity, the middle school cheerleaders will host middle school pep rallies for each sports season to introduce the teams.

Secondary principal Jared Lee said there are many things that have yet to be finalized, especially logistical matters. The biggest unknown, according to Lee, is the scheduling, after which everything else will fall into place. Among matters which are still in the process of finalization are fine arts, P.E., room locations, and lockers.

With advice from several faculty committees, Lee is in the process of creating a secondary classroom and teaching schedule, with the goal of creating a core group of teachers who will focus on the middle school. Eventually, he hopes to have a set of teachers who will focus almost exclusively on the middle grades.

Currently, BCS has many teachers who teach both junior high and high school and two teachers who teach only sixth grade. The scheduling will go hand in hand with planning the room, hallway, and locker locations.

TCSIT

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who made the trip, BCS won first in 17 events between junior high and high school. Junior Megan Monacelli placed first in two newspaper events and second in another, while junior Carlos Franco won both Spanish comprehension and Spanish Bible reading.

Sophomore Serene Nermal was first in computer-animated design, and senior Caleb Kronke took first in dramatic interpretation.

For junior high, seventh-graders Andrew Armstrong, Brendan Holloway, and Josh Sass, along with sixth-grader Gabby Nguyen, served as a sort of super-team, together sweeping many math events. Armstrong took the top prize in three of them; he and Holloway also placed first and second in high school Algebra I.

In other junior high events, seventh-grader Tiara Allen and her sixth-grade brother Luke tied for first in spelling, to no one’s surprise. Eighth-grader Matthew Scarborough won a math event, classmate Mia Dedear won music memory, and seventh-grader Natalie Williams took first in poetry.

Brentwood students enjoyed their time spent with each other and often with students from other schools. It would not be rare to see a BCS student performing a dramatic event for a student from Northland Christian or Fort Worth Christian to get feedback on what he or she should work on.

TEACHER FEATURE: *Libby Weed*

Wise Dr. Weed guides students with genuine love

megan **MONACELLI**
reporter

Known for pulling teeth and having a caring heart, Dr. Libby Weed has touched the lives of thousands of students in her 28 years as elementary principal.

Current BCS high school students describe her as poised, organized, friendly, and never condescending or rude.

“She always remembers my name,” junior Caitlin Messinger said.

Born and raised in Port Arthur, Weed always wanted to be a teacher. She first knew this when she taught her pre-school brother to read, and she joined Future Teachers of America in high school.

More than teaching, she says she is most thankful for her family. She met her future husband Michael Weed at Abilene Christian University and has been married to him for 45 years.

“I’m so thankful for a long and strong marriage,” Weed said.

The two enjoy staying active by biking, running, and walking around Austin on the weekends.

They have one daughter, Susan Womack, and one son, Jonathan Weed, both of whom graduated from BCS and have taught there. She also has five grandchildren, the oldest two of whom are current BCS elementary students. Weed said having them close has been a blessing, and she enjoys having them over for Sunday dinner and for regular sleepovers.

Another passion of Weed’s is singing and the theatre. In high school, she participated in choir and drama productions. In her adulthood, she joined the Austin Civic Chorus and now serves as the president for the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Austin.

Weed married a recent ACU graduate two years into college. They moved to Tucson, Ariz., where she attended the University of Arizona for one year. Moving then to Austin

where her husband began further graduate studies, Weed completed her bachelor’s degree in education and English at UT Austin and then taught for three years in Austin public schools. During that time, she also completed a master’s degree in English literature at UT.

A stay-at-home mother for a few years while her children were small, Weed free-lanced as a writer and editor with a religious publishing company. After the children were in school, she went to work full-time for the company. She began working at BCS part-time in 1982 and was hired as principal in 1984.

A few years later, Weed began graduate work at UT, not necessarily planning to get a doctoral degree. But since her husband had completed his doctorate, she made up her mind to go the whole way.

“I thought, ‘Why do all this and not get a Ph.D.?’” she said.

While disciplinary actions are part of her job and that is what some students fear, being principal is more than enforcing the rules. She began “friendly visits” with students when a second-grade teacher asked her on behalf of a student why they only visit Mrs. Weed when they are bad.

“It shouldn’t be that way,” Weed said. “I like getting to know the kids and establishing a relationship with them.”

She interacts with students outside her office as well. According to fourth-grade teacher Glenda Morrow, Weed stands in the halls some mornings, greeting students as they come in and calling each of them by name. She also makes regular visits to each classroom, including one morning per week to look at the different projects displayed on the walls outside the classroom and congratulate the students, and at the

beginning of every school year to welcome the students, third-grade teacher Evelyn Ellis said.

“She doesn’t just glance at the walls, she actually takes the time to read what they have written or look at what they have created, and she encourages them personally,” Ellis said.

She also reads a Christmas story to each class and comes by on character day to see the students’ costumes.

Another one of Weed’s unique principal duties is pulling teeth. This began in the ’80s

when a student came to elementary office manager Mary Kay Clark, who provided Band-aids, Neosporin, and care for scrapes and bruises, asking her to pull a loose tooth. Clark didn’t like the idea, so Weed did it, thus starting a trend.

Calming the anxious student’s nerves, she gently but firmly gets the job done and sends the student on his or her way with a tooth-shaped box containing the treasure to be put under their pillow that night. Many BCS alumni remember this.

“She pulled one of my teeth in second grade,” Colleen Jung (’09) said. “I got a little tooth-shaped box too.”

However, this isn’t necessarily the lasting memory Weed wants students to leave with.

“More than pulling teeth, I hope they see me as a person who pointed them to God and as someone who helped them find their God-given talents,” Weed said.

BCS graduates Jenny Eason (’10) and Katie Legband (’09) described Weed as a strong woman who loves the Lord.

“Her kindness and genuine interest in all her students is what I remember the most about her,” Legband said. “She is willing and wants to help anyone who walks through her door, and she always has a positive, Godly demeanor that makes people love her.”

Sixth-grade teacher and long-time friend Becky Stewart said Weed also gets to know the faculty.

“She cares about both her students and her faculty, and that comes through,” Stewart said.

According to Morrow, each elementary teacher periodically has a personal conference with her to discuss personal life, struggles, or just to catch up.



photo: Gabriel Breternitz

Hello, dear Dr. Libby Weed, here visiting with a first grader, says she enjoys “getting to know the kids and establishing a relationship with them.”

see **WEED**, page 8

BCS takes third in state at TAPPS academic

e. j. **SUNG**
reporter

BCS placed third with 57 points in the TAPPS 3A state academic meet on Apr. 1-2 at Concordia University in Austin. The Brook Hill School of Bullard won with 79 points, and St. Thomas Episcopal of Houston placed second with 66 points.

Competing at the 4A level the past two years, Brentwood won the championship in 2009 and was second in 2010.

Brentwood’s top performer was junior Daniel Gardner, who won first place in calculator, third place in mathematics, and fifth place in science.

Senior Caleb Kronke placed second in solo acting, while Polly Park placed third in number sense. Junior Carlos Franco placed second in Spanish.

Franco, a Mexican citizen who is spending a year at Brentwood, expressed disappointment

about the test’s badly written sentences.

“The test was really poorly made and it actually led me to some confusion,” Franco said with a smile.

Junior Min Cheol Shin placed fifth in number sense and sixth in advanced mathematics, and junior Megan Monacelli placed second in ready writing.

The school newspaper took fourth place. Adviser Jonathan Weed praised the efforts of this year’s editor, senior Gabe Breternitz, but admitted that they were hoping for better.

“I’m still hoping to get some constructive criticism from the judges, so we can have some idea how we might improve,” he said.

The school yearbook took sixth place. Adviser Jessica Love was pleased at placing at the state meet. She said they can place higher next year with stronger photos, especially of the elementary grades, and more solid stories.

“I would have liked to do better, but we were up against some tough schools whose

yearbooks had bigger budgets,” Love said.

Dr. Libby Weed, who is the coordinator of TAPPS academic meets, said her expectation for this year was a “whole new ballgame,” as Brentwood entered a new division, especially without a long time “MVP” Matthew Gardner. She said Brentwood was clearly the strongest team in its district, but found out that there were extremely strong schools in the state meet.

“I thought it might be less competitive than last year, but it turned out to be more competitive at the state meet this year,” Dr. Weed said.

She said she was proud of all students, both at district and at state, and thankful to the coaches and parents who worked hard to prepare the students to do their best. Dr. Weed said she hopes that next year students will start earlier on their preparation and practice more, especially in speech events.

“I hope that these events will help students to discover paths for their lives that honor their Creator,” she said.

Art fourth in state

continued from page 3

competition. Khang was signed up for two on-site events that day, which she was unable to participate in. According to Morin, she has participated in these same events the past two years and each time placed either first or second. If the past is any indicator, Khang’s illness cost Brentwood between 16 and 20 points, twice the amount of points BCS needed to place first.

Also, sophomore Mary Monacelli was unable to participate in her on-site event. Morin said Monacelli “would have placed first,” which would have meant 10 more points for BCS.

“I was extremely proud of our art students. We did very well in a very competitive district,” Morin said. “Two art students could not participate, and had they participated, given their previous points, we would have scored first.”

Welter plays longball; baseball team on track for playoffs

ciro **CASTRO**
reporter

With a little under two weeks left in the season, the Bears' baseball team has a good chance to make playoffs. They started the district schedule with two losses but then recovered, winning three games in a row. Through Tuesday's game they were 3-4 in district, but their final three opponents are teams they have already beaten. Senior captain Matthew Welter has hit a record of five home runs so far this season, with three coming in one game. Head coach



photo: Lanae Hollingsworth

Lean into it Senior Matt Welter delivers a pitch in a recent game. Welter has a BCS record five homers.

Efrain Contreras said the season record was held by Kenny Robertson ('06), who hit four home runs in 2005.

"Welter just got in a good groove and hit the ball well," he said. "The small field and wind helped him in one game, but he would have hit the home runs anyway."

Junior Diego Cole leads the team with a batting average of .474 in district games. He is followed by seniors Derek Tresslar (.467), Brandon Jones (.400), and Welter (.400).

BCS is scoring an average of 11 runs per district game. On the other hand, they are giving up an average of 12.6 runs per game.

Contreras said the team has improved since the beginning of the season.

"We just need to continue hitting the ball," he said. "We also need to work on being consistent on defense so we can minimize errors."

Following are the Bears' recent district results:

3/22: St. Dominic Savio 25-16 L

The Bears played their first district game in hot weather two days after spring break. This game was also important for Brentwood because it was their first home game in two years. Cole smashed a home run off the scoreboard in the first inning, and the Bears took an early 4-0 lead.

Cole said he didn't know it was a home run until he rounded first base.

"All I knew is that I hit it pretty good," he said. "I

heard it hit the scoreboard and saw the umpire signaling the home run; it felt really good."

However, the Bears started making errors on defense and Savio took an 11-9 lead in the fourth inning. After that point, Savio increased their lead with more BCS errors. The boys fought back each time they batted, but whenever they scored runs, so did Savio. Despite at least two runs apiece by senior captains Tommy Schiffgens and Welter, as well as by Jones, Cole, sophomore Ciro Castro, and freshman Skylar Treut-Schaffer, Savio won the three-hour, seven-inning game.

Assistant coach Scott Cunningham pointed out an important problem.

"We need to prepare ourselves mentally in a better way," he said. "We lose ourselves every time we make a mistake."

3/24: Bryan St. Joseph 8-0 L

Two days after the boys' first game, they had their second home game against the best team in the district, according to Contreras. Bryan played nearly mistake-free on defense, which made Brentwood's job more difficult. However, the Bears were much improved on defense, including catching every fly ball that was in play. They had a lot more difficulty in batting in this game due to two effective pitchers who threw impressive curve balls. Jones' double off the outfield wall was one of only four hits that BCS managed.

3/29: @ Central Texas Christian 15-10 W

Led by Welter's power display, the Bears' first district win came in Temple despite questionable calls by officials, according to players and coaches. The boys took advantage of the small field by slamming five home runs – three from Welter, one from Jones, and one from senior Brett Withem. Although some of the players had difficulty in batting against the curve balls of the first pitcher, they improved

their batting after CTCS switched pitchers.

Cunningham said the Bears played well on defense compared to other games, and he also said they improved their batting.

"We batted better and had better base running, which was reflected in the score," he said.

According to players, they felt better about winning this game after they found out that Central Texas Christian had beaten the two other teams the Bears hadn't played yet.

4/1: Waco Texas Christian 12-10 W

Welter continued his hot streak by pounding another home run on his first hit. But the defense made simple mistakes, to which Waco responded with nine runs. The offense did not start out well either but exploded with a string of consecutive hits and took a 12-7 lead in the 6th inning. Waco scored three runs in the beginning of the 7th inning before Cole's pitching shut them down.

4/5: Round Rock Christian 12-1 W

The Bears started strong, leading by nine runs in the 1st inning. With excellent pitching by Cole and an almost mistake-free performance by the defense, the boys led 10-0 before Round Rock scored in the fourth inning. Brentwood responded with two more runs, ending the game by the "run rule" after five innings.

4/7: @ St. Dominic Savio 13-3 L

Playing without Welter or Castro, who were both out of town, the Bears played hard but could not keep up with Savio.

"We missed our two starters, but we still battled hard," Contreras said.

4/12: @ Bryan St. Joseph 18-0 L

After losing some players to academic ineligibility, Brentwood struggled against excellent pitching, failing to get a hit. Coach Contreras rotated his pitchers, giving all seniors a chance except for Welter, whom he saved for Friday's game.

Softball slides into first place, eager for shot at state title

kia **KHADEM**
reporter

The Lady Bears finish their district schedule this week, after going the past two weeks without any district games. Undeclared through Tuesday's game, the girls are on the path to make the TAPPS district playoffs, which begin on Tuesday, May 3.

Coach Paul Sladek made it clear that his expectations remain high by stating that if Brentwood did not host the playoffs and were not the district champions, "it would be a big disappointment."

At the end of last season, to inspire the team to win the state championship this year, Sladek gave each player a photograph of the field where the state championship game will be held. They were instructed to put them on their mirrors at home.

The team started district play with a temporary tie against St. Dominic, and won their following games against TSD, San Juan Diego, and TSD again. They currently rank first in district.

Sladek said the team has had too many erratic performances, and that they need to get more

consistent with their wins.

"While I think the team is good, they can be a lot better, especially if they want to make playoffs," he said.

However, Sladek also complimented the Lady Bears in several areas, including their capacity to learn and the respect shown toward their peers.

Sophomore Lanae Hollingsworth leads the team with a .500 batting average overall, and she is batting .714 in district.

"We've been doing well in district," senior captain Somare Peyton said. "I think we made a lot of progress since the beginning of the year."

Following are the team's recent district results:

3/22: St. Dominic Savio 14-14 S

BCS jumped out 11-1, but then struggled. Hollingsworth led the team with four hits. None of the officials or coaches knew the rules for extra innings, and since darkness was falling, the game was suspended. It will be resumed on Friday, April 15.

3/24: TSD 4-2 W

The Lady Bears got their first district win in a hard fought game. They led 1-0 but before TSD

tied it up. Junior Diana Torres hit a triple, and junior Haley Decker struck out six TSD batters, to lead the team to victory.

3/29: San Juan Diego 24-0 W

Decker pitched a no-hitter, and Lady Bears' batters capitalized on poor pitching by getting good hits and walking 11 times. Sladek also attributed some of their success to the exhaustive pre-game warm up.

4/12: @ TSD 18-9 W

Despite leading 3-0 after the first inning, the girls were not satisfied with the way they were playing. With Decker pitching well, they picked up the pace on offense and finished with an easy win.



photo: Mark Merkord

Fastball Bears' pitcher Haley Decker, a junior, gets ready to deliver during the game against St. Dominic Savio on March 22. After jumping out to an 11-1 lead, Brentwood struggled and allowed Savio to tie the game 14-14. The game will be completed today, April 15, before the rematch begins.

Girls’ varsity wins RRCA Relays; district meet next week

priscilla GLENN
reporter

Brentwood Christian School’s varsity track teams are now preparing for their district meet, which will be held on April 19 in Lockhart. The top four finishers in each event will advance to compete at regionals on April 28 in Houston. Those who advance to state will compete in Waco on May 5-6.

The varsity girls’ team took first place at their most recent meet, the Round Rock Christian Relays in Florence on April 9.

Junior Brittany Brunson placed first in both the 1600 and 3200, running them in 5:53.31 and 12:51.83, respectively. Priscilla Glenn, a sophomore, won the pole vault with a clearance of 9-6, and sophomore Serena George took second with a vault of 7-0.

Sophomore Morgan Vandygriff earned first in the triple jump with a leap of 32-8. Glenn was second in the 300-meter hurdles, running it in 51.06, and third in the 100 hurdles, at 18.34. Glenn also ran the 4x400-meter relay with George, Brunson, and Vandygriff, which earned second.

Sophomore Michelle Dembosky earned third place in the discus with a throw of 78-6¾. George placed fourth in the 100 meters with a time of 15.25, and Glenn placed fifth in the high jump at 4-2.

Girls’ coach Katie Smith said she was extremely pleased and looks forward to district.

“I was very surprised about how well we did with how small our team is (seven girls) and against many larger schools,” Smith said.

The boys finished 12th out of 16 varsity teams. Junior Trenton George earned third in the shot put with a throw of 37-7½. Sophomore Steven Bailey earned fourth in the pole vault at 9-0. George also earned fifth in the 100 with a time of 12.24.

Sophomore Matthew Onabajo placed fifth in the 400 meters (57.03) and placed sixth in the

200 (26.82). Junior Marcus McCormick placed sixth in both the 1600 (5:25) and 3200 (50.4). McCormick also ran the 4x400 relay with Onabajo, Bailey, and freshman Wesley Mory.

A week earlier, both track teams competed in the Ro-hawks Relays at the San Antonio Airbase on April 2. The girls placed ninth out of 17 varsity teams, and the boys placed 15th out of 21 junior varsities.

Glenn placed second in the pole vault (9-0). Brunson earned fourth in the 1600 (5:46.23), and placed fifth in the 3200 (12:15.84). George placed fourth in the high jump (4-10), and Vandygriff placed fourth in the 400 (1:04.09).

The girls’ team improved greatly with the addition of Brunson, an all-state runner who had initially decided to not run track this year. After Smith convinced her that she could continue to do basketball off-season and track, she signed back up.

“I rejoined because I am very competitive and I like to run,” Brunson said. “I didn’t want to miss out, especially since I could do basketball and track.”

For the boys, Bailey placed fourth in the pole vault (9-0), while Onabajo placed fourth in the 400 (56.19). Onabajo also competed with junior Duc-Anh Phan, Mory, and sophomore Ciro Castro in the 4x400 relay, which earned fourth.

Coach Rotich said the boys ran in the junior varsity level because the coaches believed that was more at their level.

“We wanted them to compete against those who were around their skills,” he said. “They competed very well and are steadily improving.”

A week earlier both varsity teams competed in the Eagle Relays in Lexington on March 24. Competing as the only private school out of 11 schools at the meet, the girls finished seventh while the boys finished eighth.

Glenn earned first in the pole vault (8-6) and second in the 300 hurdles (50.38). Vandygriff placed fourth in the 400 (1:04.65), while George tied for fourth in the high jump (4-8). Glenn, Vandygriff, George, and junior Katie Clement earned fifth in the 4x400 relay, while Dembosky placed sixth in the discus with a throw of 87-6.

“Compared to the public schools, and with how small our track team was, I believe we personally did very well at this track meet,” Dembosky said.

Coach Smith said she knew they would see a lot of tough competition and had not expected the team to place high. Still she was pleased with the results.

“Those who did go competed well, and we had several place in a meet with larger schools competing against mostly juniors and seniors with us being mostly sophomores and freshmen,” Smith said.

The boys’ track team was led by McCormick, who placed sixth in both the 1600 (5:35.15) and the 3200 (12:17.43). McCormick also ran in the 4x400 relay with Phan, Onabajo, and Howell, placing fifth.



photo: Matthew Onabajo

Up and over Sophomore Serena George strains to pull herself over the bar at a meet in San Antonio on April 2. She took fourth place.

Golf team completes season on upswing

matthew ONABAJO
reporter

To conclude their first season since 2003, the BCS varsity golf team finished eighth in the regional tournament on April 4, shooting 43 strokes lower than they did in their first tournament of the year. Senior Ryan Brunson shot a team-best 101, the best individual score of the season.

Although the boys did not win any awards this season, head coach John Vandygriff said they learned more about the game of golf, about their individual abilities, and about each other.

The regional tournament was hosted by The Woodlands Christian at the April Sound Country Club in Montgomery, near Lake Conroe. Houses surrounded the greens and fairways and were often hit by stray shots, giving the course what Vandygriff called a “tight” feel. April Sound had an interesting feature in that their driving range is out into the lake and uses floating golf balls that are retrieved by a man with a net in a little boat.

For the first time at any tournament, the boys were under the scrutiny of the crowd as they all teed off in sequential fashion at the first hole. Previous tournaments used a shotgun start in which the players all start at the same time but on different holes with very few, if any,

spectators nearby.

After seven holes, the boys regretted not bringing enough rain gear when wind, rain, and lightning caused a 90-minute delay, according to Vandygriff.

Brentwood finished with a four-player team total of 463. The best individual score in the tournament was a 71 by a female player from Regents.

Keeping with tradition, the team ended the tournament with a trip to Whataburger, the team’s “favorite eating establishment,” with some guys ordering two meals.

Senior Levi Matus was voted the “most valuable thirst quencher.” Vandygriff said most guys would come to tournaments without food and water. Matus always furnished the team with a supply of Gatorade, water, and a few protein bars. Besides placing in the team’s top five, that was his most valuable asset, according to Brunson.

“You can’t play golf on an empty stomach,” Brunson said.

The boys finished fourth at the district tournament, played on March 29 at the Grey Rock Golf Club in South Austin. Though there were only four teams, the top four automatically qualified for the regional tournament.

Junior Diego Cole (102) and seniors Brett Withem (106) and Matus (107) finished

with the best scores in the group. The guys finished 52 shots behind the third-place team, but improved by 75 strokes on the same 18-hole course, in which they played their first tournament on March 3. San Antonio Keystone, New Braunfels Christian, and Regents were the other schools that competed.

The team competed at the Wolf Dancer Golf Club on March 21 in Lost Pines southeast of Austin. The tournament was hosted by Hyde Park and was a “harder” course because of faster greens and high winds. Despite higher scores, Vandygriff said he was proud of his team for their continuing desire to learn.

“Our scores were up a bit, but it was nice that the guys got to play a very nice layout,” he said.

In order to do better next year, the team will need to recruit more players to replace the four graduating seniors, practice over the summer, get modern equipment, and “and learn to love the greatest game ever played,” according to Vandygriff.

Between now and next season, the team will have the option to face off against the “old guys”: head coaches Vandygriff and Brant Troutman. If the team’s best ball score can beat the coaches’ individual scores, the team will be “eligible for a special surprise,” Vandygriff said.

Lee: watch sports

continued from page 2

If my history lesson doesn’t impress you, allow me to introduce a brand-new aspect of sports.

With the understanding that we are living in the 21st century, it is plain to see that science plays a huge role in our lives, and some people even believe that everything and anything can be explained through science. When love is considered to be chemical reactions, rational and scientific thinking evidently had their cost.

Rationally, sports should not have a big role in this world. Playing sports is time-consuming, exhausting, and often injuring. Same goes for watching sports, since it is agonizing to watch your star losing. Nevertheless, sports zealots follow their heroes with religious zeal, and the athletes chase after their lofty ideal – sportsmanship – like knights follow chivalry. In a sense, the sports zealots are the last romantics of the age.

Rational folks like Kia may think this is an overstatement, bordering on stupidity. However, I’d still challenge them to get out and play. The best argument for sports is made not in the classroom, but on the field, and one should not criticize sports without first losing himself in the heat of competition. Call this irrational, but the best way to enjoy sports is to play without reason.

Classroom aides serve teachers in all kinds of jobs

carter **BOYD**
reporter

Shortly after a junior high was added to the fabled establishment of Brentwood Christian School, secondary students, some ready to serve and others to sleep, have served as classroom aides for Brentwood’s hard-working teachers. Performing great feats every other day, classroom aides sacrifice their elective periods and occasionally their well-being to assist overburdened educators in the struggles of everyday life.

Brentwood’s long-standing tradition of allowing students to volunteer as classroom aides to faculty members has, for the most part, served teachers well. “Classroom aide” is chosen as an elective, and each student is assigned a faculty or staff member. Students can request a specific faculty member, and positions are allotted on a first-come, first-served basis, but requests are usually granted.

Usually during fifth period, although occasionally at other times, classroom aides head to their respective rooms to begin their tasks for the day. Some aides serve on B-days and others on A-days. Typically, a classroom aide will grade assignments, organize papers, and perform other tasks to lighten the load on their designated faculty member. However, some teachers have more interesting chores for their volunteers.

“My student aides perform quite a feat,” English and drama teacher Chloe Campbell said. “They grade papers, run errands, take stuff to people, and one of them carries ice every time he’s here.”

The first task generally associated with being a classroom aide is the predictable grading of papers. Some aides, however, perform unexpected and occasionally bizarre errands. The high school office aide regularly waters flowers around campus, an unnamed faculty member recalled her aide once using power tools, and some spend their time mapping the locations of Brentwood’s numerous fire extinguishers. Once a week, one of the aides for the high school office replaces the water for the two Betta fish that dwell there, and senior Ryan Doyle once repotted the office’s decorative tree.

Most teachers will vouch for their classroom aides, maintaining that they are helpful and hard working in every task. However, there is some speculation that many students choose this elective with the mentality not of service, but of laziness. Some classroom aides are rumored to have signed up to assist a teacher in hopes that their assigned faculty member will allow them to use aide period as a time to catch up on work, or even as a sort of free period.

“Being a classroom aide isn’t exactly work,” an anonymous student said. “I’m glad I signed

up for it, because it’s basically a study hall.” Teachers, however, stand up for their classroom aides, saying that they are responsible and enjoyable students who spend their aide



photo: Gabriel Breternitz

Water boy Senior Brett Withem, an aide for Rosemary Henderson, waters the plants outside near the circle drive every other day as part of his duties as an aide.

period working hard. “Being my classroom aide, a blow-off class? My aides do most of my grading,” history and English teacher Craig Moore said in his aide’s defense. “In fact, today, my aide spent the entire period grading and did not finish. It depends on the amount of grading to be done, but it is indeed work.”

Campbell expressed the same feelings about this accusation.

“If someone said that being my aide was a blow-off class, they would be lying,” Campbell declared indignantly. “I know it, and they know it.”

Rumors and suppositions as to the legitimacy of the classroom aide position are not uncommon, but teachers with (and most students serving as) aides maintain that reports of laziness among these volunteers are false. Students say they enjoy helping out their teachers and deny that they signed up in hopes of doing nothing.

“I love being a teacher’s aide,” said senior Danielle Kawaja, who is aide to computer teacher Sandy Wiles. “It’s an opportunity to help out one of my favorite teachers, and to spend some one-on-one time getting to know her as a person. It’s a great use of a class period.”

Whether they’re grading homework, cleaning classrooms, tending to Brentwood’s flora, or acquainting themselves to teachers, student aides play a vital role in everyday life. While some admit to laziness, most aides are happy and helpful volunteers, without whom many heavy-laden teachers would undoubtedly find the strains of instruction too much to bear.

Weed mentors with passion, warmth

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“You feel her warmth and care the minute you walk into her office,” Morrow said, “and you leave feeling so good about what you do and where you are.”

Secondary principal Jared Lee considers Weed a mentor and said he is honored to work with her. He said that along with treating her coworkers with the utmost respect, she desires a cohesive team with collective decision-making.

“This is difficult to do with many different personalities on a team, but she does it well,” Lee said.

One of his goals as secondary principal is to be a team-builder, and this stems from watching her, he said.

According to Lee, a co-worker of his at Midland Christian School said, “I can’t believe you get to work with Libby!” when he was hired at BCS in 2007.

“I think this speaks volumes to her influence and her passion and effort into what she does,” Lee said. “People recognize it, and it is dynamic and contagious.”

Weed has been a huge contributor to his learning the finer points and details of the school and how it is run, Lee said, and one of the biggest impacts she has made on him personally is her support.

“The emotional and professional support she provides makes me a better principal,” Lee said.

Former English teacher Linda Pimentel has known Weed for approximately 28 years, having met her when they were part-time teachers the year BCS added a secondary school. Pimentel describes her as creative, approachable, curious, and loving.

“She has an absolutely sterling Christian character and love for God,” Pimentel said. “And she is meticulous about excellence in all things academic.”

According to Pimentel, Weed is also the “master of practical jokes.”

Pimentel lit up as she remembered jokes they would pull on each other on TCSIT trips. Ellis laughed as she also recalled Weed introducing herself as Ellis’ daughter’s Aunt Edna to the daughter’s soon-to-be fiancé last summer at an education workshop in Tennessee. This introduction was much to Ellis’ surprise, and they still laugh about it today.

Weed said she believes there is no better way to make life matter than by influencing children, and that’s why she wanted to work in elementary education.

“Education is a way to touch the future, and Christian education is a way to affect hearts and souls as well as minds,” Weed said.

Her lengthy service at BCS and her conviction that God called her to this place is a source of joy, Weed said.

“I am truly thankful that I have been able to serve in this ministry for most of my adult life,” she said.

Perfect conclusion for Math League

Brentwood students finish year 13th in state

carlos **FRANCO**
reporter

For the first time in more than five years of competing in the Texas State Math League, Brentwood Christian made a perfect score, which was on the last test of the year. BCS finished in 13th place out of 62 Texas schools who take the test.

Math League is a contest composed of six tests given throughout the school year, and each test has six questions.

The results of the final test were announced on Feb. 24 during chapel by high school math teacher Kaleen Graessle, who was ecstatic after announcing the perfect individual scores, and the perfect 30-point school score. Graessle also gave certificates to the students with the highest cumulative scores.

“I found it interesting and highly satisfying to come back and find out that not only had we got sixes, but we got six of them,” Graessle said.

Math League tests are meant for high school students, but some of the junior high students taking Algebra I are allowed to take it too. A surprise for many people was that one of the perfect scores in this test was by

seventh-grader Andrew Armstrong. “Andrew is young, but he is remarkable, bright, and overall he works hard,” Graessle said.

The other students with perfect scores were seniors Mike Lee, Caleb Kronke, Polly Park, and Gabriel Breterniz, and junior David Lee.

“The moment I finished the test I knew I had at least five out of six correct,” said Kronke, who made his second six in high school. “It seemed too easy.”

In this year’s previous five tests there had been only one perfect individual score, achieved by junior Min Shin, on the second contest. Shin had Brentwood’s highest cumulative score with 28 points. Following Shin were seniors Park with 27 points and Kronke with 26 points, and juniors Daniel Gardner and David Lee with 23 points each.

“I am thankful to my math teachers because they had done a good work,” Shin said.

Graessle said she expects that for the coming years Brentwood will get even better scores.

“I am optimistic for future competitions, because there are lots of great young students,” Graessle said.