

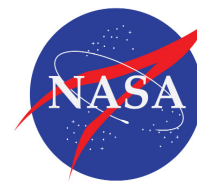


THE BEAR FACTS

VOL. 28 NO. 5

BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

MARCH 2016



Inside: Poetry insert

April is National Poetry Month, and students at BCS have already gotten into the spirit. Brother Robison made an assignment for the junior class which involved reading some modern poetry and presenting an original interpretation of a specific poem. Ten papers from the AP classes and four papers from the regular class were then given to two judges who are current or former English teachers, and they were asked to rank the papers. The top six in the AP class and the top two in the regular class are what have been printed in this Bear Facts issue as a supplement.

Enjoy the modern poets, and congratulate your classmates on their good interpretations!

—Paul Robison

'Partnership' shows off school talent

By Mary Womack

The 25th annual Partnership Dinner was unlike any that came before, with various forms of entertainment provided by students and even some teachers. The night featured Jazz Band, Encore, and such characters as Willy Wonka, and that Cat in the Hat.

It was also the first time in history for the event to be held in the spring.

More than 500 people attended the tuition-lowering fundraiser in the Austin Renaissance Hotel beginning at 6 p.m. The customary silent auction started things off, but this year bids were only done electronically, so many guests stayed busy making bids with their phones.

Middle school students Adrie Gruis and Alyssa McLain sang the National Anthem before guests enjoyed a meal of chicken and vegetables.

For the first time in the history of the event, there were no famous athletes, authors, or artists. Instead, the students performed. Some of these performances included the opening song of the fall musical *Seussical*, instrumental

see **Dinner**, page 4



photo: Kay Taylor

Oompa loompa Eighth-graders Madison Arbuckle, Elias Qussad, and Jenna Riley perform an excerpt from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* during the Partnership Dinner on March 5, held as usual in the ballroom of the Austin Renaissance Hotel.

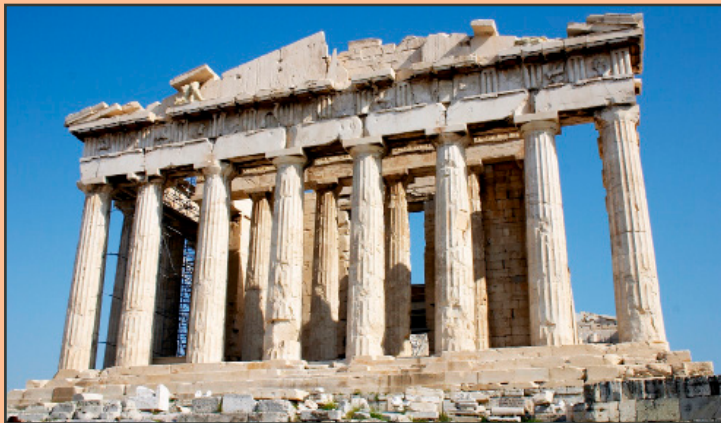
Seniors ready to depart on 'trip of a lifetime'

By Joshua Sass

If you look at the senior class today and study them carefully, you might notice they seem more excited than usual. It's Friday, the day before spring break, when students get nine consecutive days of school off, so the excitement must be overflowing from that. But there's more: 30 seniors along with 11 parents and sponsors are about to travel overseas to visit parts of Greece and Italy.

"This is a trip of a lifetime," senior Mason Miller said excitedly. "I can't wait to go."

Students leave



from Austin on March 12, flying to London and then onward to Athens.

Trip leader Kaleen Graessle will be joined by teacher sponsors Ashley Dargai, Jimmie Harper, and Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth.

"It's going to be like one huge party," senior Sarah Connor said. "Spending so much

time with my friends in Europe is going to be great."

After the travel day, the second day begins with a walking tour of Athens led by a guide. This will be followed by a time for small groups to explore the surrounding area and admire the views of and from the city.

Day three is when the seniors visit the iconic **Parthenon**, a temple dedicated to the Greek goddess Athena. The crew will also visit the 1896 Olympic stadium and the Acropolis museum.

The seniors leave Athens on day four and visit the city of Delphi, famous for the Oracle of Delphi, a "messenger" of the god Apollo, who received and delivered prophecies for the ancient Greeks.

On day five, seniors visit a monastery that provides a glimpse of the more recent history in the region. The monastery is a prime example of medieval art as it sits upon cliffs

see **Memories**, page 2

Softball team crushing foes

By Mary Womack

The varsity softball team has been pounding out hits and squashing the competition to start the season off strong with a 6-1 record, including a win in their opening district game against Central Texas Christian on Monday at Balcones.

Head coach Paul Sladek said he is excited about the athleticism and versatility on this year's team. The recent inclusion of the girls in soccer and basketball after the first three games has allowed Sladek to play people where he thinks they will excel the most.

"It's like a puzzle to figure out who's best at what position," Sladek said.

Leading the way at pitcher again this year is senior Sofia Torres, whose dominating performances this year include a no hitter.

"She's a pitcher who is super athletic, and

see **Softball**, page 8

Read It and Weep: Nick Bergeron

Becoming an informed, serious voter is everyone’s job

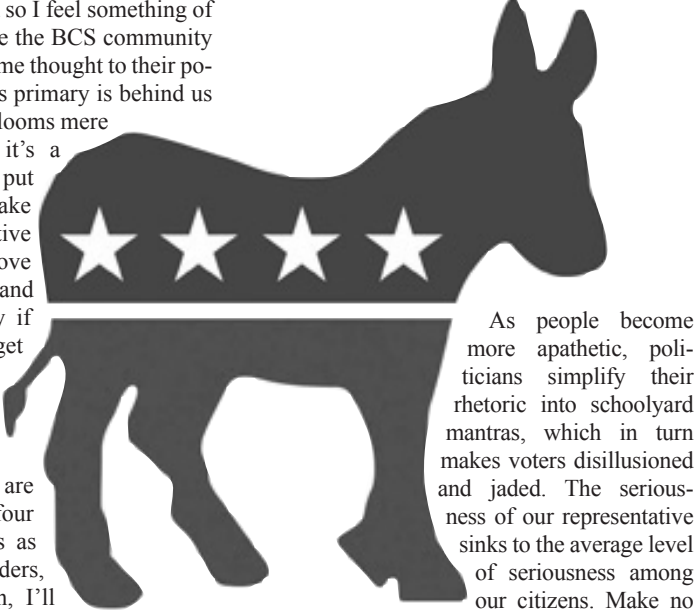
In the four years I’ve reported and editorialized for The Bear Facts I’ve tried to shy away from talking politics. It’s not a topic I have much to say about that’s worth reading, and, as I learned when the November 2012 edition of The Bear Facts published my essay endorsing Barack Obama’s reelection campaign, it’s a polarizing issue. People still come up to me wanting to talk about why they disagree.

However, I’m a registered voter and proud citizen of the Union, and so I feel something of a civic duty to encourage the BCS community young and old to give some thought to their political activity. The Texas primary is behind us and the general election looms mere months before us, so it’s a good and proper time to put on our thinking caps, take our seats on our respective sides of the aisle (or remove our seats from the aisle and take them far, far away if it suits our fancy) and get political.

Whew. If there’s one thing the presidential campaign has shown us so far, it’s that people are tired of politics. Even four years ago, such outliers as Ben Carson, Bernie Sanders, and Donald Trump (Oh, I’ll get to him in a second) would never have garnered the attention they have. Now, they’re getting press by virtue of the fact that they’re outliers. Being a respected, mainstream politician is now more of a liability than an asset. This year I’ve heard people without a streak of punk rock spirit in them complain in shades of Dead Kennedys that it’s time to boot out the Establishment that Runs The Whole Show Behind The Scenes and Stacks

The Cards. The Bear Facts would be one remarkable high school newspaper if I could tell you for sure if they’re wrong about that or not, but it can certainly be said that a lot of people are disillusioned with politics. They feel we’re given a choice between Scylla (R) and Charybdis (D) every four years, and both of them are liars anyway so how is one to know what they really stand for.

This way of thinking forms a vicious cycle.



As people become more apathetic, politicians simplify their rhetoric into schoolyard mantras, which in turn makes voters disillusioned and jaded. The seriousness of our representative sinks to the average level of seriousness among our citizens. Make no

mistake, becoming an informed and serious voter is difficult and tedious. In preparation for the primaries I took some time to compare and contrast candidates’ views. This then required me to reexamine my own views, which led down a rabbit hole, or rather rabbit cavern of study and reflection necessary to become an adequately prepared voter before November. Political involvement isn’t fun, but it’s entirely necessary.

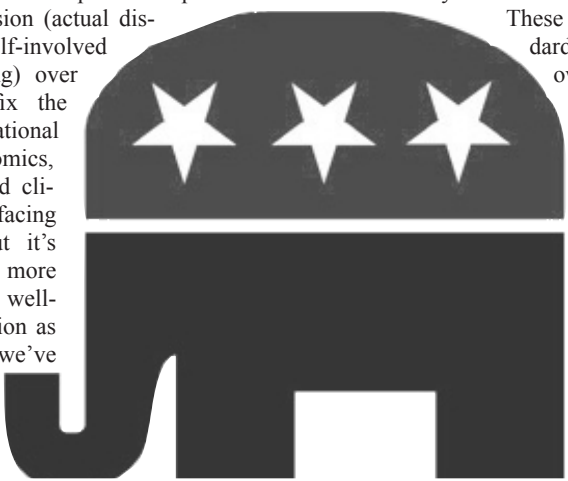
If America were threatened by an external

force, say a hypothetical Fourth Reich, we would all hopefully be prepared to defend our country. I’m convinced America is threatened, but not by jackboots or extremists. Rather the enemy is more domestic, subtle, and hard to eliminate: our own apathy. Unlike invading soldiers who can be pushed back heroically or terrorists who can be tracked down through ingenuity, there’s no glamor in fighting apathy. There’s nothing cool about sitting quietly weighing through the options or participating in discussion (actual discussion, not self-involved rhetorical fencing) over how best to fix the problems of national security, economics, social justice and climate change facing our country, but it’s equally if not more important for the well-being of our nation as any heroic battle we’ve ever fought. And it’s a duty for all citizens, not just activists and political junkies and editorialists; the health and ultimately the survival of our democracy hinges on informed, active voters.

We’re only starting to see the effects of a citizenry that doesn’t care about interfacing with its government. We’ve seen the success demagogues like Donald Trump have had tapping into frustration and fear. From the media, we’ve seen a weird focus on personalities, not policy, and marketing over serious policy debate. There’s not a thing funny about that. If left unchecked the situation will only get worse, and I’m convinced it can get far worse.

When you’re a senior at BCS, you’ll take a semester class over Government, and you should pay attention in it, but that isn’t enough. The Internet makes dozens of reputable journalistic papers available to you for free, and you should read those, but that also isn’t enough. A citizenship in a democracy is a responsibility, just as important as your obligations to your family and workplace, and it requires vigilance, reflection and action. Organize and take matters into your own hands.

These are demanding standards. We have to take ownership of and responsibility for our government. But when we hold ourselves to these standards, we’ve seen through history that remarkable things happen; unprecedented levels of freedom and achievement are the result of a healthy democracy.



Memories of Greece, Italy await Class of 2016

continued from page 1

demonstrating the architecture of the time. This will be the last day the seniors spend in Greece before taking an overnight ferry across the Adriatic Sea to mainland Italy.

Day six will consist of traveling to Rome from their location on the coast to begin the first of their two days there, but there is even more importance surrounding this part of the trip. The Class of 2016 will tour the Vatican, on their trip’s seventh day, during the Jubilee of Mercy. A Jubilee is called every 25 years in the Catholic church to stand as a reminder of

God’s providence and mercy, but this one has been specially called by Pope Francis to focus on mercy. There will be ceremonies occurring during this time, which will enrich the atmosphere surrounding the Vatican.

Day eight will be when most of the touring around Rome will take place. The seniors will see other integral parts of Italian history in the Roman Colosseum and Forum.

“I am so excited to try gelato,” senior Martha Hughes said.

On day nine, March 20, the seniors will ride a high speed train to Florence, internationally renowned as one of the most beautiful cities in

the world. There they will visit many historic sites including the Duomo, the main cathedral that demonstrates the elegance of the Gothic style of architecture.

The seniors leave Italy to head back to the United States on day 10.

Graessle, the mother of two graduates and a frequent trip sponsor, said she thinks she has been a part of 10 trips through the years. But she has never been to Greece.

She also shared a fun fact: Each of this year’s sponsors has lived in Europe for at least a brief period of time.

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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Eighth-grade class set to embark on historical journey

By Andrew Schmitz

While many other students will be traveling to ski resorts or beaches, 40 BCS eighth graders will be sightseeing around our nation’s capital.

Continuing a tradition that has lasted decades, the BCS eighth graders will be heading to Washington, D.C., touring from Sunday, March 13, through Wednesday, March 16. The 40 students and eight parents will be going with trip coordinator Summer Best and sponsors Stan Caffey, Carrie Hunter, and Correy Washington.

The students will be visiting well known places such as the Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Smithsonian, and the Arlington National Cemetery.

This is Best’s first year leading the trip, and her second trip attending as a sponsor. She also attended the trip when she was a BCS eighth grader in 1993.

“I’m excited to see the students learn about people who gave us freedom,” Best explained.

When the group arrives in Washington, D.C., on Sunday afternoon they will be heading to the Arlington National Cemetery, where they

will see the Kennedy Gravesites, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and the Changing of the Guard. They will also visit the Museum of American History, where the Model 1861 U.S. Rifle Musket is kept. This gun was used during the Civil War era.

On Monday the students will likely stop by the **White House** and probably take quite a few selfies. They will then head to the Holocaust

Memorial Museum, where they will study different exhibits such as one called “Remember the Children: Daniel’s Story,” explaining the story of a young German boy living in Nazi Germany through the Holocaust.

“I’m excited about seeing the Holocaust Museum, because of what everyone has said about it,” Zach Myers said.

The students will also be visiting the Air and

Space Museum, which is part of the Smithsonian. The kids will see historical exhibits such as the Lockheed Vega, which is a plane that Amelia Earhart flew.

“I’ve seen the Smithsonian before in the movies, and I want to see if it’s close to the same in real life,” Preston Combs said.

Tuesday the students will visit the World War II Memorial, which honors the spirit, sacrifice, and commitment of more than 16 million American soldiers who served in the war. Students will also see the Washington Monument, which honors one of the Founding Fathers. Other memorials they will visit include the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, 9/11 Pentagon Memorial, U.S. Air Force Memorial, and the Iwo Jima Marine Memorial.

The students will finish with a tour of the Capitol on their last day. They will visit exhibits such as the Capitol Dome Model that helps recognize society’s greatest buildings. They will also see the Library of Congress and the Supreme Court. After that, the students will head to the airport to go home.

Best has requested that pictures from the trip be posted to Twitter with the hashtag #BCSD.C.2016.



Potential students tour campus at Open House

By Michelle Emmel

About 50 BCS students helped at the annual Admissions Open House on Feb. 21 from 2-4 p.m., helping to make a positive impression on many potential students and

their families.

The event consisted of student-led tours showing the visitors all around the campus and to the different classrooms. Among the student helpers were five National Elementary Honor Society members and five Safety Patrol mem-

bers. Eight parent volunteers also showed up to help out.

A total of 32 families visited, accounting for about 49 potential students from preschool up to the 11th grade. Families came to the CSA lobby, signed in, and were assigned a tour guide. Then they went into the theater where they got to see Encore and the Jazz Band perform.

The tours generally included a full school tour including pre-school through high school, but tours were made to suit each family’s interests. Three of the families were looking for their children to join in 2017, while others said they were planning ahead for future years.

When the families arrived at a classroom, they were greeted by the teachers who welcomed them in and explained their curriculum. The tour leaders stayed with the families until all their questions were answered before proceeding to the next destination.

Admissions director Kimberly McLain said that everything went smoothly, and that the visitors had wonderful feedback to share.

“They were impressed with our student guides, felt everyone was warm and welcoming, and they loved that so many staff and faculty were present to help, answer their questions, and welcome them,” McLain said.



photo: Oriana Gonzalez

Entertainment Led by Travis Pollard, the high school Jazz Band kept the music coming for visiting families during the Admissions Open House on Feb. 21.

Velasco again swims for gold

By Diego Escobedo

BCS sophomore Hannah Velasco won first place in state for the 100-yard breaststroke at the TAPPS state swim meet on Feb. 12 in San Antonio. Velasco competed in two events, winning the breaststroke with a time of 1:08.58 and taking second place in the butterfly with a time of 1:01.84.

Velasco placed first and second in the same events at the TAPPS meet a year ago.

“I’m grateful I was able to represent Brentwood and thankful to God for giving me the ability to swim,” she said.

She said she wishes she would have gotten a faster time and earned two gold medals, but she’s happy with what she did.

“Plus losing always fires me up to be the best I can be and reach my full potential,” she said.

Velasco practices before school for an hour, and again later in the day. She swims at Western Hills Athletic Club and goes to the gym several times a week.

Velasco said she works hard to reach new goals every year. Eventually she wants to swim in college.

“Swimming makes me feel free, and it releases my stress,” she said.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Keely Hardin

Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2016.

‘Super likeable’ athlete passionate about children

By Nick Bergeron

When you talk to people about Keely Hardin, they’ll invariably mention her skill as an athlete, which won her a scholarship to Belmont and the 2015 volleyball state championship, but they’ll also paint a picture of a friendly, confident young woman whom you can’t help but like.

Keely began playing volleyball in the third grade, and she decided to take her commitment to the sport further when she was fifteen.

A coach of her club volleyball team told her volleyball was her ministry, which inspired Hardin to pursue the sport in college.

This year, the BCS Lady Bears volleyball team won the state title, having finished second in state the previous two years.

The victory was an “unforgettable” climax to Hardin’s high school volleyball career, not only for the state title but because she “got to do it with my best friends.”

Keely chalks up the state victory to the Lady Bears being “physically and mentally mature,” on a higher level than they were previously.

“I’ve probably had the most second place state medals in history,” says Keely, who also fought for the state title her freshman and sophomore years in basketball. However, she says she knew going into this year’s season that “this is the year.”

On the court, Keely is known for her skill and confidence as well as her natural ability to lead the team.

“I don’t know if I’ve coached even one or two other kids who were such natural leaders,” basketball coach Devan Loftis says.

After courting recruitment by Stephen F. Austin, Houston Baptist University, ACU, and others, Keely decided to sign to play volleyball at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn.

After the “doors closed” to other schools, Keely’s club volleyball coach told her a Belmont representative had been asking about her. Keely flew to Nashville for the school’s volleyball camp and was impressed not only by the athleticism but also the comfortable atmosphere of the campus and the personally welcoming coaches.

No one-trick pony, Keely has also played basketball for the Lady Bears since her freshman year, taking the difficult position

of point guard as a 14-year-old with no prior basketball experience.

Her career highlights include more than 1,000 points scored, the BCS all-time assists leader, three years of all-state accolades, and one game in which she scored eight three-pointers.

Keely plans to study early childhood education with a minor in special education.

“From a very young age I’ve had a passion for children,” Keely says.

Indeed, she began babysitting when she was

in the fourth grade, not long after she needed a babysitter herself. A lifelong friend of a special needs child, Keely says her interests developed more specifically to working with handicapped kids. She remarks how capable handicapped children are, “yet people only see the disability.”

“They’re not as limited as people think,” she says.

Keely has gone to BCS since kindergarten. Two of her coaches, Kaylee Loftis and Katie Smith, taught her in early elementary.

“She was one of those super likeable kids with a rare outgoing personality,” says Loftis, who remarked that Keely looked after younger teammates “like their own parents.”

Teammate and friend senior Blair Westlund remembers how Keely became her first friend at BCS when she was five: She simply went up and talked to Blair.

Senior Jami Lee notes Keely’s determination and work ethic, especially shown through her determination to balance multiple sports with school.

“She always finds ways to get the job done,”

Jami says.

Her mother, Pam, works in the BCS athletics office; her father, Paul, is the president of the Texas Food and Fuel Association; her sister Bailey and brother-in-law Michael are BCS alumni (2012); and her sister Addison is a BCS junior. Her grandmother, Jodie Coyle, taught fourth grade at Brentwood for nearly 25 years until retiring in 2012.

Having been in art through high school, Keely now specializes in lettering and decoration work in Contract Art. She is currently working on a piece involving a painted, manipulated hymnal.

When she is not at school, she acts as a leader in her church youth group. She also describes herself as “passionate” about mission work. She’s gone to Peru and New Orleans for mission trips and intends to continue her mission work, dreaming especially of going to serve in Africa.

So whether it’s in the front of your child’s classroom, behind the Belmont net, or in an African village, keep an eye out for Keely Hardin.



Dinner spotlights BCS talent

continued from page 1

solos, and a piece from the middle school play *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

Two BCS teachers were also featured, as band director Travis Polard played a saxophone solo and fourth-grade teacher Abbie Boyd sang a solo with Encore.

Numerous videos were also shown such as gymnastics by eighth-grader Joel Montgomery, slam poetry by senior Elise Lilya, interviews with ele-

mentary students, and highlight reels of sports. Parent and board member Brian Jackson emceed the evening.

After the entertainment came the live auction, and as before, this year’s featured a puppy. Daisy, a red-heeler border collie, sold for \$3,000. Also up for bid were two reserved parking spaces, which sold for \$1,700 each.

A “paddles up” auction finished the evening, as guests pledged various amounts to help pay for a new floor for the FLC basketball court.



photo: Dorothy Walters

Flashback Fourth-grade teacher and BCS alum Abbie Boyd (2010) performs *Gratitude* with Encore at Partnership Dinner.

Patient, wise, humble ‘Bro Rob’ declines sainthood

By Camille Sunshine

Missionary, teacher, scholar, poet, singer, pastor, father, romance counselor, rapper, and mentor, Dr. Paul Robison leads his students in following God and loving literature. Robison teaches English, Bible, and SAT Prep, and he says he enjoys working with students because of their “vitality and energy.” “It is rewarding to see the changes that occur in development from the time they come in as freshmen to the time I see them leave,” Robison says. “I like the ‘aha’ experience when the light bulb comes on.” Robison consistently searches for new ways to make English more interesting to his students. He frequently finds review games and contemporary versions of old literature on the Internet to make his class more accessible. “Brother Robison is probably the most selfless person I know,” fellow English teacher Ashley Dargai says. “He’s such a conscientious teacher and cares so much about the students learning, trying new things, and researching new topics. He’s very dedicated to growth.” He also jokes and raps in class. When teaching about paradoxes, Robison said that he and Dr. Hollingsworth are a “pair of docs.” Every time he teaches about a love poem, he coaches the boys in the class on how to talk to a woman. To keep his students Christ-focused, Robison also includes Biblical references in classes by pointing out Biblical allusions and lessons in the literature his classes read. He says he tries to learn from Jesus as a teacher and prays to be more like Him. However, not all of his Bible references are spiritually serious. Once, when Robison was teaching his AP English class, he began talking about Adam searching for Eve. According to Robison, when Adam found Eve, he said “Shazam!” “I think Brother Robison is the most patient man I’ve ever seen,” junior Morgan George says. “Hearing his stories about being a missionary is so inspiring. The wisdom from his experiences is a spiritual example in my life.” Many students say that Brother Robison truly wants his students to succeed and is always there to help. His seventh-period AP English class has tried to “saint” him multiple times for all the study guides and helpful test hints he has given them. Robison refuses his “sainthood” every time. “The word I think of is humble,” history teacher Jimmie Harper says. “The figure that is Bro Rob is deeply intelligent, wise, and knowledgeable, and yet is seeking God still, and that’s inspiring.” Robison’s namesake, former ACU chairman Dr. Paul Whit, was the first to give Robison

the idea to be Brother Robison instead of Dr. Robison. Whit said his first title, Doctor, was earned, while his second title, Brother, was given to him through grace. BCS alum Libin Koyikalathu (’15) took this name and shortened it to “Bro Rob,” which quickly became popular among most students. Robison’s father was a preacher, and so as a child, he moved to a new church in Texas about every two years. He attended Harding University and received two bachelor’s and two master’s degrees: Bible and English, and missions and New Testament, respectively. While getting his undergraduate degrees, Robison was able to go on five trips to Italy through chorus tours and mission trips. He says that he found Italy’s culture to be very different from the culture of the rest of Europe, and that its churches were doctrinally mistaken. On one of his later trips, Robison met his future wife Melinda. He taught at West Memphis Christian Academy for one year before getting his graduate degrees. Robison got a doctorate in ministry at Bethel Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., through a long-distance program where he only had to be on site for about two weeks at a time. In 1982, the Robisons and their four-month-old son Titus moved to Italy. They went intending to plant new churches but ended up working with four smaller churches in different parts of Italy. “I loved the culture because it was different,” Robison says. “It was a challenge working with small churches.” In 2000, the family returned to the States, and Robison began teaching Bible and missions at York College. The Robisons wanted their parents to be able to spend more time with their grandkids, and their oldest son was about to go into college. Robison recommends that everyone spends one year in a foreign country so they can see the cycle of things that happen there. “God has given me the blessing of seeing so many different cultures, customs, and nationalities,” Robison says. “I look at America differently. If America is a square and Italy is a circle, I’m kind of like a stop sign.” From 2007 until he came to Brentwood in 2013, Robison taught at Prescott Church of Christ in Arkansas. He had been looking to leave because he felt like he had done all he could do there when he got a call from two of his former York University students. Brent-

wood’s vice president of development Dr. Kevin Claypool and former communication director Stephen Colwell offered him a job, which he gladly accepted. “It’s a challenge here, but I do hope that a few students will love literature and writing and all the stuff that goes with English when it’s all said and done,” Robison says. Robison has four grown children and five grandchildren. His oldest three attended York, where he taught for seven years. His youngest son, Nathan, is autistic and lives at home. “He’s an amazing child,” Robison says. “I wish I knew how to communicate with him in a fuller way.” Robison says that in his own way, Nathan is friendly, reaches out, and has his own agenda. Each day at the Robison house follows nearly the same format. Father and son wake up at about the same time, and Robison takes care

of Nathan until he leaves for school. Mrs. Robison takes care of Nathan in the day, and Robison takes care of him in the evening. They watch Wheel of Fortune every night and do puzzles together until bedtime. Robison has lived his life in devotion to God’s purpose, and if asked, he will tell you stories of all the ways God has provided for him. “He led me to a great Christian wife,” Robison says. “She helped me to instill within our kids the Christian faith. I am proud that they are all active in their churches and strong in their faith.” Robison writes poetry in his free time and sings in a barbershop quartet. He attends Manor Church of Christ and preaches there about once a month to give the pastor time off. He leads a sophomore guy mentor group, and each student in it will attest to his wife’s cooking. He brought espresso to his English class once and either brings food from his wife or makes sandwiches for his mentor group. “Brother Robison is a beautiful man,” sophomore Alex Pittner says. “He’s also surprisingly good at making sandwiches. We need (people like that) in the world. And he has great hair.”



Baseball players aim high, hit far

By Diego Escobedo

The varsity baseball team opened their district season on March 8 with a 18-0 win over TSD in the first game of a doubleheader played at Southeast Metro. BCS lost the second game 4-2.

Their record is 5-3 overall and 1-1 in district.

Players have said they have high expectations for the season because the team has a lot of potential, good leadership, and great chemistry. In the early part of the season, the Bears have struggled with defensive errors and mental mistakes. After some early troubles with hitting, the team put that behind them by scoring 52 runs in three games last week at the Hill Country Tournament. Overall they have hit eight home runs.

“The team is doing well to this point,” head coach Brian Thrift said. “We are pleased to see the progress of our players.”

Senior shortstop Jake Velasco, a two-time all-state player, said he is optimistic about this team’s potential.

“We are a young team, still trying to get things together on defense, but we look really strong on offense,” he said.

Brentwood’s next game is Friday, March 11, at New Braunfels Christian.

“The biggest struggle we face going into spring break is maintaining our focus in practices,” Thrift said. “Overall we are still focused on our main goals, we just need to narrow our focus a bit to get where we want to be.”

Following are the results of all their games played so far:

2/2: Austin Royals 10-1 W

After starting pitcher Garrison Ryberg had an easy first inning, Brentwood scored two runs. They scored four runs in the second inning and then one in the third with a solo home run over the left field wall from sophomore Patrick Hanrahan. They continued with two in the fourth and one in the fifth.

2/9: Austin Royals 6-5 L

After scoring four runs in the first two innings, Brentwood struggled on offense while the Royals started scoring runs.

“The effort was good, but we played really sloppy,” assistant coach Brett Gerritse said.

3/1: New Braunfels Christian 5-4 W

The Bears scored two runs in the first inning with sophomores Dillon Smith and Diego Escobedo scoring on a double by freshman Jack Oberwortmann. Brentwood made it 3-1 in the fifth inning on a single by Escobedo. They scored two more runs in the final inning on singles by Ryberg and junior Michael Hickl.

Hill Country Tournament (three games):

3/3: Reagan 19-4 W

The Bears opened a 4-0 lead in the first inning when Escobedo hit a two-RBI double to the gap, and freshman Blake Benton soon followed with a two-RBI single. Brentwood then scored nine runs in the second, including three-run home runs by both Velasco and Hickl.

3/3: Hill C’try 14-13 L

The defense allowed six runs in the first two innings, but a three-run home run by Velasco kept Brentwood close until Hill Country took a 12-5 lead in the fourth. But the Bears didn’t give up. Hollingsworth hit a home run in the seventh inning to lead another rally, but in the end they fell one run short.

“They never gave up,” Gerritse said. “That says a lot about the players.”



photo: Shelby-Ann Spencer

Wait for it Junior Garrison Ryberg prepares to explode on a pitch in a recent game. Not just a good hitter, Ryberg is the team’s ace on the mound.

Golfers win

BCS took its first-ever golf tournament championship on Monday, March 7, when the varsity boys won at the Wildflower Country Club in Temple.

Senior John Hollingsworth was first among individuals, shooting 75. Junior Graham Marks finished second with a 78, and sophomore David Tiner was third with an 83.

This year is the first year for Brentwood Christian to have a girls’ team. Just like the boys, they are coached by John Vandygriff and Brant Troutman, and they have participated in the same two tournaments as the boys.

The golf season opened with the St. Dominic Savio tournament on Feb. 29; both teams finished third. Hollingsworth shot a 77 to finish third overall, and the girls were led by Avery Miller’s 103.

The next tournament for both teams will be on March 22.

3/4: Round Rock 20-1 W

The Bears scored five in the first and then six more in the second, including a two-run home run by Escobedo. In the third inning, Escobedo homered again, leading to four more runs. Almost everyone had hits in the game, and Oberwortmann reached base every time.

3/8: @ TSD 18-0 W / 4-2 L

Brentwood opened district with a doubleheader, winning the first game easily. Ryberg was untouchable in pitching a complete game shutout, and BCS led 13-0 after two innings.

Escobedo pitched the second game and gave himself a 1-0 lead with home run in the first. But eventually the Bears could not keep the lead.

Varsity track teams feature more athletes, coaches

By Michelle Emmel

The varsity track teams have started their season with two meets in the last two weeks.

“So far we have been performing at or above expectations,” head coach Katie Smith said. “It is still early in the season, and so our standards will continue to go up as we improve and as we know what our competition is.”

Smith said she is aiming to improve on last year’s district finish of third place for the girls and 11th for the boys. This year’s teams have 15 members each, and several new coaches.

“Our goal is to get all of our new, young athletes plugged into events they can compete in and work out for the next few years,” Smith said. “We want to compete well in our

district and to qualify as many for regionals and state as possible.”

The season started off well with their first meet on Feb. 26 at San Antonio Christian School. Competing against Central Texas private schools such as St. Michael’s and Cornerstone Christian, Brentwood placed sixth in boys and fifth in girls. Freshman Chase Blackman placed first in triple jump, and senior Martha Hughes won the pole vault. She holds the school record for pole vault and also is the two-time defending state champion in that event.

Other top finishers included junior Jordan Johnson, second in high jump; sophomore Hunter Burcham, fourth in discus; sophomore Mallory Lesko, fifth in shot put; and freshman Jaclyn Wishard, third in high jump and sixth in

the 100 meters.

On March 5, the teams competed at St. Andrew’s Episcopal High School. Beating his own personal record, Joshua Sass placed fifth in high jump. Other top finishers included the team of Jenna Beggs, Mackenzie Gatlin, Jane Hughes, and Abby White, who placed sixth in the girls’ 4x100 meter relay; the team of Chase Blackman, Hunter Burcham, Brayden George, and Curtis Mack, who finished eighth in the boys’ 4x100; and senior Kayla Lane, who was eighth in the 3200 meters.

This year four freshmen joined the girls’ team, and seven joined the boys’ team.

“I’m excited because we have a bigger team this year, and it’s exciting to see how everyone will do,” junior Hope Hutson said. “I hope that

everyone will score well.”

There are a few new coaches along with returning ones: Correy Washington for sprints, relays, and jumps; Jeffrey Bates for middle distance and strength training; Stan Caffey for hurdles; Ronnie Copeland for high jump; Randy Yarbrough for the throwing events; and Patrick Bradford for sprinters and jumpers as well.

“I am very pleased with our new coaches,” Smith said. “Each brings their own experience, and it’s great to be able to divide athletes up based on their events and needs and not have to go back and forth between groups.”

After a meet scheduled for March 10 in Lampassas, the next meet will be on March 31 in Lexington.

Boys fall in area playoff Girls play well in loss

By Benjamin Helyer

After winning the district championship and getting a bye in the first round of playoffs, the varsity boys' basketball team lost their area playoff game to Waco Vanguard 57-40 on Feb. 23.

Although they were down significantly in the first half, the Bears fought back in the second half to stay in the game, but they were eventually outsized by the towering players of the other team.

"I was proud of the way our guys fought in the second half despite being down by so many points," head coach Brian Thrift said.

Junior Graham Marks said that he felt the last game was simply an unlucky one.

"Our shots weren't falling, but that's basketball," he said. "Sometimes you have off days, but it's like that in every sport."

Two weeks earlier, the Bears clinched district for the second time in three years after an easy 60-23 win against San Juan Diego on Feb. 9. It was also Senior Night for the Bears, and before their game, seniors Diego Batlle and Robert Lesko were honored by their coaches.

Going into the season, the team had the goals of winning district and competing strongly dur-

ing the playoffs, and these goals were met.

Thrift said the team improved overall from the beginning to the end of the season, but that there is still some room for growth. He said the team especially needs more of what he calls "internal leadership."

"Our players have to take ownership of how we want things to be done on and off the court," he said. "We didn't do a good job as a team taking care of each other off the court, and that was because we lacked some leadership in some areas from our veteran players."

Marks agrees with Thrift in that the team grew during the course of the season.

"At the beginning of the season it was kind of rough, but when the season went on the team found their roles," he said. "Once we found our roles then came our chemistry...I think it was one of our better seasons as a team because we had really good chemistry and the guys knew their roles. We trusted each other."

Next year, the team will still be young, but there has also been experience gained during this season that will help the Bears out.

By Benjamin Helyer

After successfully winning their first playoff game, the Lady Bears were unable to pull through against a strong opponent during their area playoff game on Feb. 23 in Beaumont. They lost 45-30 to Legacy Christian Academy.

The Bears played defensively against Legacy, who had the number-one junior point guard in the nation. After a quarter, the Bears led 8-3, but by halftime, they were trailing 17-13.

In the third quarter, senior Keely Hardin was on the bench due to foul trouble, and the girls struggled to keep pace. However, at the end of the quarter, Addy Hardin made a deep three-point shot which pulled Brentwood to within six, 27-21.

With two minutes left, the Bears were still behind by six, but that's when Legacy pulled away.

The Hardin sisters led the Bears with nine points each, and Addy Hardin led with six rebounds.

Loftis said the team knew it would be a difficult game beforehand.

"Going into that game we knew that we had

to play very high to win," he said. "(The) kids played well and adjusted to our strategy of slowing the game down."

Senior Cailin McDaniel also found the team's performance during the final game to be excellent.

"That was probably one of our best games," she said. "We went out with a bang."

In the first round of playoffs Brentwood defeated Bryan St. Joseph 48-44 on Feb. 19. Playing on their home court, the Bears overcame poor shooting and led for most of the game.

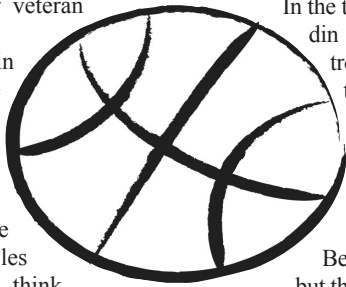
Junior Alicia Dixon led the team with 19 points.

Ten days earlier, the Bears won their Senior Night game against San Juan Diego. Keely Hardin led with 23 points, while French had eight rebounds.

Coach Loftis said he has high expectations for next year, noting that the team's strong performance in the last game sets the stage. He also said that this season gave the underclassmen on the team some valuable experience.

While no one was ready for the season to end, McDaniel summed up the mood.

"I wish it were not over, because I wasn't ready for it to end," she said. "But we had a good season – we fought really hard."



Underdog girls win playoff before spirited season ends

By Joshua Sass

The Lady Bears' soccer season ended with a 7-0 defeat in the second round of playoffs against their own district's champion and eventual state champion, Veritas, on Feb. 20. Brentwood struggled against a faster, stronger,

and deeper roster than their own, with only one substitute.

Veritas did not score their first goal until the 25-minute mark and was unable to pull away from a fiercely competitive Brentwood squad for the first 30 minutes. But without the roster depth needed, the Lady Bears quickly fell too

far behind to mount a comeback against such a physical opponent.

"These girls did it the right away," head coach Cash Miller said. "They never complained and always represented themselves, this school, and honored God. I could not be more proud of them or more excited about the future of Lady Bears soccer."

Before their second round loss, the Lady Bears dominated Dallas Westwood 5-2 on Feb. 16 in Dallas. According to Miller, this was the program's first-ever area championship. The Lady Bears came out fast and never looked back, demonstrating that their tough district schedule made them a force to be reckoned with, as they took down a higher seeded team.

Senior Hailey Miller scored four goals, and senior Rebekah Legband had three assists.

Despite the loss, the Lady Bears reminisce fondly upon their season, which was defined by offensive explosiveness, as they advanced to the second round of playoffs for the first time since 2010, in the inaugural season of girls' soccer.

The Lady Bears finished fourth in district with a record of 5-6 and an overall record of 9-8.

Miller led the team in scoring with 22 goals,

and freshman Madison Moseley had 11. Legband led with 10 assists.

Miller was named first-team all district. Legband, senior Sarah Connor, sophomore Rebekah Connor, and sophomore Alex Sass were named to the second team. Sophomore Avery Miller, sophomore MaeAnn Herring, Moseley, and freshman Lauren Rzepnewski were all honorable mentions.

The season was characterized by the team's struggle to maintain health and adequate numbers. Even with the recent successes of the program, the Lady Bears have been unable to field a team with more than a couple subs.

Sarah Connor said she fears these struggles will continue unless there is a sizeable influx of participation in the soccer program. The team will lose five seniors this year, which requires the emergence of several key freshmen.

A bright spot to the team only having 13 members was noted by the seniors, who expressed that they were thankful for how close the team had become and how glad they were glad for having the opportunity to get to know each other better.



photo: Jennifer Hitt

Too much Senior Hailey Miller leaves behind an overmatched, out-of-breath defender in a recent game. Miller will be playing at Lyon College next year.

NASA trip features school buses, alligators

By Isabel Harris

One 150-mile journey for Brentwood, one giant leap for sixth graders!

Every year since the first trip on Jan. 29, 1986, the NASA trip has been what teacher Becky Stewart calls the most enjoyable and

memorable trip for the sixth graders. This year's adventure was on Thursday, March 3, when all 72 sixth graders departed from Brentwood at 5:45 a.m. to make their way down to Houston.

But Houston, we had a problem, because for the first time ever, parents did not go on the

trip. This year the students used buses and school vans to get to Houston instead of parent vehicles. This disappointed parents, since many of them look forward to the trip as much as students do. Stewart pointed out that the trip is for the students, not the parents.

Joining Stewart with the students were teachers Paula Bennett, Cynthia Davis, and Kay Taylor, as well as former teachers Amber Kidd and Michelle Mohrmann.

For about six years, the classes have split up and gone to two separate places since there has been more than 48 sixth graders. One half of the class went to the Challenger Center in the Houston Museum of Natural Science, and the other half went to Challenger Center in the George Observatory at Brazos Bend State Park. That's where they performed their space missions.

The group that was at the George Observatory for their simulated mission saw an alligator with several babies at one point along the 800-yard walkway they take through the swamp to get to the observatory.

Each student spent one session in the mission control center and one session as an astronaut

Armstrong perfect

Senior Andrew Armstrong finished his Texas State Math League career with a perfect score of 36 this year. After the last of six tests was completed on Tuesday, March 8, Armstrong is currently alone in first place in the state.

in the spacecraft. By doing this the students gained the experience where astronauts train and did problem solving experiments to see what it is really like to be a part of the team.

Halfway through the day, they grouped back up at the Johnson Space Center. There they took a guided tram ride tour to see where the astronauts train for missions on the International Space Station and to visit the historic mission control room that managed the Apollo and shuttle flights.

This trip coordinates well with what the students are learning in class. Students were learning about the history behind the space center and, in Science, about space in general.

Before the students left on the trip they were required to send in an application for jobs at the simulated space missions such as communications team, life support team, or bio lab team.



photo: Michele Weilemann

Roger that Lola Olhaver and Sam Benton work in mission control on the NASA trip.

Softball girls score runs in bunches

continued from page 1

she commands the strike zone this year," Sladek said. "She fields her position great, and when she gets on base she causes chaos."

Sladek said his expectations for the year includes to make playoffs, and his personal goal is to develop two new pitchers.

Players are eager to be back on the field and begin their run at the playoffs.

"I'm excited to be back on the field with some pretty amazing girls," junior Hillarie Carpenter said. "I have high hopes for this season, hopefully making a playoff run."

Seven starters are batting over .500, led by senior Shelby Greer (.800), senior Madi French (.727), Carpenter (.667), and freshman Samantha Fowler (.600).

Junior Nicole Dobos leads with 14 RBIs, while Torres leads with 14 runs scored, followed by sophomore Madison Wells and Fowler with 13 each. Senior Sam Woolverton leads with three doubles.

Torres has a 4.77 ERA with 30 strikeouts in 29 innings.

Following are the most recent results:

2/18: San Juan Diego 16-9 L

Six opposing hitters combined for 11 hits. After San Juan scored six in the fifth inning, Brentwood answered with five of their own. The Lady Bears scored two in the seventh

with a double by Dobos, but San Juan scored seven runs in the last two innings to clinch the win. Fowler led the team with four hits; Woolverton had three, including a double and a triple; and Dobos had three hits and four RBIs.

2/22: San Marcos Baptist 20-5 W

SMBA jumped out to a five-run lead only be answered with 11 runs from the Lady Bears. Torres began pitching during the first inning with BCS already behind, and she allowed only one walk and one hit the rest of the three-inning game. The Bears pulled away with seven more runs in the second and run-ruled their opponent with nine runs in the third inning. Brentwood batters had six hits, including two by Torres, and walked 14 times.

2/25: @ Hill Country 11-0 W

Torres pitched a no hitter with six strikeouts. The Bears also dominated offensively with 12 runs, including two apiece from Fowler, Carpenter, and Torres. Carpenter also led the team with three RBIs. The game lasted only four innings due to the run rule.

2/29: @ Saint Andrews 9-5 W

This was the Lady Bears' second time to beat St. Andrews and the first for an away game. BCS started the game off strong with a four-run lead, and they led until the sixth when they fell behind 5-4. But BCS scored five in the seventh and shut down the Crusaders in the bottom of the inning to take the win. The Lady Bears had

16 hits and no walks, while the Crusaders totaled nine hits and two walks.

3/1: Holy Trinity 23-5 W

Brentwood had only seven hits total, but they managed to score 23 runs due to an astounding 21 walks. Holy Trinity began the game with one run, but the Bears quickly answered with 13. Holy Trinity was unable to recover in the second inning, and BCS scored 10 more to win the game. Dobos had two hits and four RBIs, while Carpenter slugged a home run. Dobos pitched the entire game to lead the team to victory.

3/7: CTCS 9-5 W

Torres had another solid performance, and French led on defense with three diving catches at shortstop. Seven different players scored for BCS, and the girls led 8-2 after three innings. French also led on offense with four hits, and Carpenter added three. The team also had 12 stolen bases.



photo: Dorothy Walters

Winding up Junior Hillarie Carpenter is hitting .667 this year and has the team's only home run.