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# THE BEAR FACTS

VOL. 37 NO. 3

BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

MARCH 2025



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## Matthew West dazzles crowd



**Donating** Junior Tanner Hunka and alumna Keira Black stand with Matthew West at the Partnership Dinner, where students, faculty, and alumni alike support Brentwood in its mission to teach and love with a higher purpose. For more about the evening, see the next edition of the Bear Facts.

## Twice is nice for Bellas

By Ally Robertson

The Lady Bellas had another record breaking year at Brentwood Christian where they won first in “Crowd Pleasers,” a dance competition in Dallas, had four dancers earn all-state awards and won the TAPPS state championship for the second year running, this time in the 5A classification.

The Lady Bellas performed two award-winning dances at state, including “Hot Wings,” a bold kick routine that they performed for the school prior to showcasing it in Waco. Additionally, “I am Lost” was the Bellas’ lyrical piece, a beautiful and longing dance that the judges described as, “breathtaking.”

Throughout their season as a whole, the team has managed to grow closer together relationally, and as a team. The success from those connections has been clearly evident.

“Growing the relationships on the team has really helped us do better because now we’re close like family,” said sophomore Ava Cavada.

The addition of Taylor Warner, a BCS alumna and now assistant director and choreographer of the Lady Bellas’ state dances, has encouraged everyone to greater heights while also furthering relationships with the dancers.

“The team has thrived this year by working extra hard and improving our skills in class and at home,” said junior Abby Lee, the team’s Social Officer. “Ms. Tay really helped us to step our game up this year by focusing on technique and performance.”

Along with competitive choreography, the dance team put in continual hours of practice, spending their summer at camps working through tougher dances, and practicing every day during the school year.

“We all just come together and

see **BELLAS**, page 12

## Basketball reaches final four

By Karlee Lawrence

The Brentwood Christian School boys basketball team nearly hit the 30-win mark this season and reached the state tournament for the second straight season.

The Bears, who finished 28-9 this year, lost to Grace Prep, 51-36, in the TAPPS 5A semifinal, an unfortunate end to an incredible season which featured a district championship and standout performances throughout the roster.

“Our team culture was built on trust, hard work, and perseverance,” said head coach Dustin Karrer. “No matter the challenge, these guys never backed down.”

The Bears went undefeated in district with a win over Brighter Horizons, 82-53, on senior night on Jan. 30. With the win, BCS received a bye going into district tournament, and made quick work of Grace Community, 70-43, followed by a victory over Bishop Dunne, 64-53, to clinch the district title and advance to the postseason.

“Winning is hard,” Karrer said. “Doing it consistently is even harder. That is what this group of guys is about.”

Next, the boys won against Grapevine Faith, 78-53, to advance on to the regional final. Despite being down most of the game, a 21-3 fourth quarter explosion secured a win over Lubbock Trinity and a spot in the state tournament.

When BCS advanced to the state semis, the team was unfortunately without the services of junior point guard Marcus Zelee, falling to a Grace Prep team which has been the state runner-up the previous two seasons.

For BCS, the team will lose three of its most decorated seniors in Blake Petty, Jake Elvin and Coleston Allen. Petty scored over 1,300 points for the Bears and was a two-time all district and all-state performer, Elvin was known for his high IQ and leadership, while Allen was part of over 100 victories as a four-year player for the program.

“I’m really proud of this team and all the work they put into this season,” Karrer said. “The seniors will be greatly missed because of their leadership and work ethic.”

The team also loses student operations manager Bolu Bayo-Ajayi, whose work ethic and intentionality on the bench will be sorely missed.

Even with the losses, BCS figures to return a strong team next year.

Zelee led with 16.6 points per game as well as 5.7 assists; he was district MVP and all-state for a second straight year. Junior newcomer Bryant Herring led the team with average of 10 boards per game, earning first-team all district, and juniors Zach Czerlinsky, Caleb Catron, Luke Weed and Nathaniel Hernandez will return, as well.



**Buzzer Beater** Junior Zach Czerlinsky fights for the basketball against tough opponents from Rouse High School, helping his team make it further.

# Spring semester stress combated with truths

## How do we live healthily in an environment of stress?

This time of the year is a time of doubt. The uncertainty of the friendships that ebb and flow from day to day, the results of tests that took hours to study

for, how handsome or beautiful other people think we are, how well we play our sport, these questions swim in the ocean of thoughts that our school holds.

The year progresses. Instead of the hard-fought, well-earned, desperate gasp of air that is sorely needed, another wave in the ocean is tossed upon us. The workload grows heavier, the suffocating feeling increases, and we are underwater again.

When doubt creeps upon us like a tiny, toxic weed, its flowers pungent and beautiful, it distracts and draws everyone away. The waterlogged mind says that everything can't be controlled, that winning, being beautiful, and having good grades determines our value.

No. This is a world after the fall, where everyone here is human, flawed. No one can get a perfect grade on every test, no one can play their sport to perfection, or always look their best.

There are no guarantees this world can offer, but the one guarantee that every Christian, no matter how deep the water has pushed us, or how far the flower has guided us, can put trust in is this: the hope of heaven, the redeeming forgiveness of God, and the gasp of air that will rush through our lungs as we break the

surface of the water.

But how do we continue to stay afloat? The waters that we drown in are in the valleys, hidden in shadow. High above us, the mountains loom, where success and joy and happiness lie. The steep climb that we have to overcome to get to the top seems impossible. Sometimes treading water is easier than putting one foot in front of the other, trying to make it to the top.

During the school year, everyone seems to follow the same pattern. At the beginning, when classes have just started, we still stand at the top of the mountain, riding the high that summer has given us. Slowly, our foundation crumbles, and we start sliding through the shale, losing altitude, and using energy to try and stay at the summit. Christmas rolls around, and we manage to take a few steps up again.

Now, this is when we lose our footing. Spring crashes down on us, a gravity that drags us down into the valley. It is a desolate place here. There is nothing but jagged rocks and dark water. The devil works here, in doubt.

It takes until the pressure of finals, of the hours of studying, and the tension of school to finally end for us to start

climbing up the incline again. Summer brings us to the peak again.

The highs and lows of life are severe. Always living in the valley and drowning in the water will never give us a chance to breathe, but living atop the mountain where the air is thin will do no better. "God is the breath of life" (Gen. 2:7). He will fill tired lungs with fresh air, fresh breath, fresh hope. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:13).

Struggles still exist, and having hope in what is to come will not make all issues dissipate. Look ahead, not up to the mountain or down to the valley. Look at the landscapes that God has created for us. Take a day one moment at a time, work to be content in hardship. Study for a test to the best of your abilities, treat friends with understanding, win sports games through teamwork, put trust in God to work out things you don't have answers for.

"He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isa. 40:29-31).

Continue to search for Jesus in joy, continue to search for Jesus in doubt. On the mountain, in the valley, on the way up and down, he will be there.

"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast" (Ps. 139:7-10).

If having a faith seems impossible, if believing in Jesus feels like a lie, if thinking that worthiness is only given to the righteous, if trusting in God has been proved wrong time after time, breathe in air, and breathe out fear. Breathe in air, and breathe out stress. Breathe in God, and breathe out doubt. The God of the mountains gives breath, the God of the valley gives breath.

## THE BEAR FACTS

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

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Digital prints of The Bear Facts are available online at [www.brentwoodchristian.org](http://www.brentwoodchristian.org).



**Holding On** How should students juggle all the balls that the spring semester throw onto us? The hold that we have on our foundation gets harder and harder to hold onto the longer that we only rely on ourselves to keep everything from falling.

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# Trump Presidency through a Christian Lens

**Staff note:** *Sophomore staff writers Anu Oguntade and Ava Cavada give their take on what the 47th Presidency of Donald Trump will mean for BCS, Christians, and the country.*

*Anu Oguntade:*

“The golden age of America begins right now. From this day forward our country will flourish and be respected all over the world again,” said Donald J. Trump during the start of his inaugural speech.

All Americans want to enter into an age of prosperity for our country, but who and how this is achieved is where the disagreements lie. During the most recent election America experienced a cultural divide over the morality of either candidate becoming president.

Trump’s win marks one of the biggest political comebacks in history. Though he was facing criminal charges during the time of the election and faced scrutiny over project 2025, Trump was still able to win the popular vote over Kamala Harris and became the first convicted felon to become president.

Many voters questioned his values and capabilities to lead our country, but the support Trump had in the various communities, including those who identify as Christians, still largely outweighed the opposition.

“Neither candidate this election had moral high ground, but Trump’s policies align more with my values as a Christian and as an American,” said eighth grader Troy Kennedy.

The failings of the last administration in economy and immigration lead to a shift in the political climate with these issues being the leading draw for voters in the election. Trump has already started to make changes in those sectors.

Within his first hours as president he signed an executive order to remove birthright citizenship, began plans for mass deportations of illegal aliens, and reinstated tariffs on China, Canada, and Mexico.

“As someone who has an immigrant parent I find the deportations and crack down on who can become a citizen necessary, but unfortunate,” said sophomore, Carolina Aranda. “As a christian I believe in welcoming all people and treating them with hospitality, but the security and well being of Americans should come first.”

Regardless of who is the president, the Bible tells us that we should submit to them. Romans 13:1 says, “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities,

for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.” four year period.

As Christians we should submit and honor God first, but we should still show honor to the presidential elect. The Power that they have been given comes from God, and they have been intrusted with it for a

In a culture that likes to glorify men, it is important to stay grounded in our faith and remember where all power comes from. God will always have the final say and no matter what happens in the next four years, whether positive or negative for the Christian community and country at large, we know who we serve.

*Ava Cavada:*

As the U.S. makes way for Donald J. Trump, our former 45th president to take office in 2025, many christians all across America are reflecting on what his presidency will mean for their spiritual journey with Christ.

For several Christian voters, Trump’s policies have aligned with their morals in the past and they are hopeful it will be as it once was. With variations of strong support and harsh criticism, Trump’s presidency has caused much conversation around the world.

During President Trump’s first term, he spoke on making it a priority to protect the religious freedom of our country and this increased his following by many. For a great number of Christians, his actions, like instilling pro-life laws, made him become even more revered.

As Trump will officially be in office for his second term, his return can hopefully be seen as a sign of hope that he will uphold a strong Christian atmosphere with his actions as our new president.

It is hard to find peace in balancing political choices and one’s faith, especially with many external forces affecting and persuading individuals in different directions, but hope persists that peace may come with his return to office.

However, not all Christians have the same hope and faith in President Trump as others do. Some believe that his previous actions or decisions do not represent what we are called to be as followers of Christ.

“I don’t agree with everything that Trump says about Christians or his ideology but I do think that he has better op-

tions and ideas for the U.S. than other presidential candidates,” said sophomore, Levi Baron.

Even though there are few concerns for Christians with Trump as president, still many are inclined towards him because of his strong leadership and what he can do to better our country.

In conclusion, many Christians are left to determine their own predictions for what President Trump will do for America. There will continue to be a mass discussion on this occurrence but no matter what will come of it, the Christian community will continue to love their neighbors all the same just as we were called to do.

God is ultimately in control of whatever the future holds these next four years but as a fellowship of Jesus, we can hope to see many impactful changes all while



Anu Oguntade



Ava Cavada

upholding the word of our Lord. God instructs us to adhere to present authority while still maintainng what he commands us to do. Hebrews 13:17 says, “Have confidence in your leaders and submit to your authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account.”

God is in control of every aspect of our lives, including that of the authority over us. No matter what the leaders of this day and age look like, God is always in control.

## NHS 2024-25 school year

By Kenton Auberger

This is the 39th year that Brentwood Christian School has inducted a new group of National Honor Society members, with this year’s ceremony happening last October. There were 36 new members that were inducted and 99 members in all throughout the high school.

The National Honor Society has participated in several volunteering and service activities so far this year. Upperclassmen in NHS volunteered with Academy 4, which is a non-profit organization that focuses on mentoring fourth graders in economically disadvantaged schools.

The group also volunteered at Community First Village on multiple days, with each grade level taking a different day. Members helped with tasks and work that needed to be done around the village, which included yard work like putting down mulch and working in the greenhouse.

Other events for this year’s NHS membership included the Admissions Open House on Feb. 23 and Grandparent’s Day later this year.

### New Additions:

Graham Auberger	Ames Peterson
Kenton Auberger	Ellie Walters
Evan Berger	Lynden Worley
Amayah Brinkley	Kale Anderson
Noah Cabiya	Peyton Daniel
Henrik Dawson	Joshua Gonzales
Renee Groomes	Emma Kent
Skylla Jimenez	Liam McGaughy
Ella Kennedy	Grey Nyby
A.J. Koncaba	Pasha Petty
Samuel Moore	Ally Robertson
Liora Naidu	Jacob Valladares
Rachael Nguyen	Ian Wiggins
Anu Oguntade	Grace Bello
Okay Okorafor	Rayen Flandes
Xavier Parra	Peyton Gates
Alyssa Pennies	Jennifer Montier
Valeria Jacobo-Sandoval	Lucy Garcia

# Bro Rob returns

By Grey Nyby

With Brentwood Christian School exiting the winter season and entering into the spring, one of the high school teachers, Nicole Goodwin, is enjoying the birth of her new son alongside the rebirth of the change in seasons.

Goodwin's son, Oliver, was born on Feb. 28.

"Goodwin is kind hearted, loving, and will be a great mom," said BCS high school principal Carol Johnson.

Goodwin will be dearly missed, and will be kept in everyone's prayers as she works through a new phase in her life.

In her absence, former teacher Paul Robison, affectionately known as Bro Rob to many at BCS, is leaving his retirement to return to teaching in place of Goodwin.

Robison left Brentwood at the end of the 2023-24 school year, but returned as a tutor earlier this year and was a perfect fit for the AP and on-level junior English classes Goodwin leaves behind.

In his short leave of absence from teaching, BCS missed him dearly, and everyone is glad to see him returning.

Eleventh grader Jose Azua feels somewhat indifferent about Goodwin's leave, as there is expected to be a workload change with her leave and Bro Rob's return. A heavier workload shows commitment to mastery, but extra time will be spent on studying.

"I'm excited to see what Bro Rob has to offer, considering I've never had him as a teacher," said Azua.

Bro Rob has an extensive history of teaching multiple grade-levels at BCS, including AP classes, and his experience, along with Goodwin's months of pre-planning and preparation for her absence, will hopefully lead to a successful transition for students in advance of semester and AP exams to come.

Goodwin has been teaching at Brent-



**Hard at Work** Bro Rob continues to hold up the English III gold standard Mrs. Goodwin has established, teaching the junior class with his vast knowledge and decades of experience teaching.

wood for several years, and her English students are always well-prepared for the rigor of the AP exam and the senior-level English classes.

The school is proud that Bro Rob will be able to pick up right where she left on before her maternity leave.

Additionally, Bro Rob will teach sophomore Bible, another subject matter he was well-versed in during his former time at the school.

Bro Rob, for his part, is excited for Goodwin, and was happy for Goodwin to have the opportunity to enjoy an exciting time in her life.

Despite his long career at Brentwood and elsewhere, Bro Rob is worried but optimistic about teaching again, comparing it to a class presentation: scary at the start with a lot to relearn, but strong over time.

The same can't be said from Johnson or others who know Bro Rob's work ethic and heart; the return of one of BCS' finest has brightened the day of many in the hallways and will surely do the same in the lives of the students he impacts.

There is no doubt that Bro Rob, with his many years of experience in education, will be able to incorporate his own teaching style into the English and Bible courses.

# A new look for BCS

By Graham Auberger

Flynn O'Hara Uniforms is now the official provider for Brentwood Christian School attire. Dennis Uniform, the former provider, is no longer in business as of Oct. 2024, necessitating the change, and the change brings new opportunities to the Brentwood students, faculty, and community.

"Flynn O'Hara is a family-owned business, providing quality with accuracy," said Denise Riley, BCS Controller.

The new uniform prices will vary, but overall, Flynn O'Hara will provide products at a 10 percent less cost than they were with Dennis.

Currently, the easiest way to browse and purchase the new set of uniforms is at the Flynn O'Hara Uniforms website. For families who believe in trying on the clothing before purchasing, the company is planning to open a physical store in Austin before the 2025-26 school year begins. This will allow for incoming Brentwood students to start their school year with fresh clothes.

According to Riley, any current uniforms purchased via Dennis can still be worn along with the new sets from Flynn O'Hara, another added bonus that won't

force unnecessary spending for Brentwood parents.

The old and new uniforms look almost identical, helping facilitate a smooth transition between BCS families purchasing new uniforms over the next few years as current sizes become too small or replacements are needed for other reasons.

Elsewhere, Flynn O'Hara has added a black skirt option for BCS girls to coincide with the recent addition of black pants for the boys.

After Dennis' shutdown, Brentwood Christian and many other schools were scrambling to find new uniform providers, with some schools even lifting their uniform policies in response.

According to the Dennis website, the company's many United States locations and customer service call centers are temporarily closed. However, other reports across the country have noted that Dennis has shut down all 40 of its nationwide locations permanently due to lack of funding.

Even through this spontaneous shift in Brentwood attire and brand, BCS believes we are in good hands regardless, trusting Flynn O'Hara to provide a seamless process for families to continue meeting their uniform needs.



**Best Dressed** BCS middle schoolers Claire Echols(left) and Emma Prundeanu show the Brentwood uniforms off during lunch, setting a good example of the Brentwood dress code to younger students. The Flynn O'Hara uniforms will look very similar to the Dennis brand seen above.

# CSA coffee shop brings students together

By Cam Cunningham

This year at Brentwood Christian School, with the help of Fine Arts director Jason Montier and high school principal Carol

Johnson, a new spot where all students can hang out and socialize while enjoying a cup of delicious coffee has materialized.

The little coffee shop, called “The Bearista,” is a self-sufficient business spe-

cializing in coffee and other bakery products sold to students on campus. Located in the CSA building, the shop has become a popular new attraction for students and staff alike.

All proceeds from The Bearista go toward purchasing continual inventory for the shop, but they will also aid in funding junior senior banquet. There are plans in the works to include service hour opportunities for those interested, as well.

The coffee shop opens in the mornings before school, and reopens during lunch for a midday pick-me-up; more types of coffee and energy drinks are being discussed for the future.

As it stands right now, working at The Bearista is a junior class exclusive opportunity.

When this year’s juniors become the next senior class of 2026, the current sophomores, class of 2027, will take their place, a trend that Montier expects to continue as long as the shop is open.

“We have plenty of help, we have more than enough students to help and have loads more who want to join,” said Montier.

In addition to the business acumen and

service-first mindset students are gleaned from the process, Montier has been grateful for the opportunity to interact with BCS students in more than just an academic setting.

“I get to know students at a different level and really get to see each other as brothers and sisters in Christ and not just as student and teacher,” Montier said.

This amazing opportunity for students from different groups and classes to come together and share coffee makes “The Bearista” an invaluable Brentwood spot to show to future generations.

The junior class has also had a lot of fun learning how to make different coffee drinks and spending time together.

“I’ve had a lot of fun working at ‘The Bearista’ because the espresso machines and italian sodas are fun to make,” said junior Ally Robertson. We get service hours for working there, so for future classes, I would definitely recommend working there.”

Go to the CSA when looking for a splash of extra energy to get through a tough day at school, the people and environment are a great place to spend mornings and lunches.



**Coffee, coffee, coffee** The junior class shows off their sweet and personally made coffees in the CSA lobby, raising money for the Junior-Senior dance coming up in April. Along with coffee, the CSA is now selling italian sodas.

## Chapels in review: Examining 2024-25 thus far

By Isabella Parra

Chapel at Brentwood Christian School has been a standard for many years. It is always a time for students and faculty to gather together and worship the Lord together.

Several new changes have been made this year to create a higher standard of organization, encourage student involvement, and focus on the faith walks of the students.

Jason Montier, Fine Arts Director, really focused on the details of the chapel in asking questions in preparation for this year: how will they get slides, who is speaking, what microphones will they use, what verses are being read, do the speakers know they are speaking?

Finding the answers to these questions led Montier to the creation of the Chapel Leadership Class, which aids in the coordination of chapel using student-led involvement.

At the beginning of the year, the first few attempts were a bit rocky, but with each passing Wednesday, the group feels confident the process is becoming more streamlined.

“I think we have found our footing and we are on cruise control,” said senior Caden

Shockey, a member of the planning class.

“Student organization [from previous years has improved],” said staff member Jimmy Harper, a member of the chapel planning committee. “I used to do everything for about seven years and for the past two years I have not done that...[the] students are doing a better job at that than ever before.”

Another change to senior-led chapels is using a theme verse. For many years, chapels would be organized with the use of theme verses; however, about five years ago, that was abandoned.

Harper and others agree: theme verses bring a level of depth and focus to our walk with Christ.

The particular verse that is being used for 2024-25 is 2 Peter 1:5-7. The nuance of the verse allows for specific chunks to be expanded into month-long themes.

The first month of school expounded on faith, September discussed goodness, and future chapels will hit topics such as godliness and love.

“I like the Seniors leading and the Senior talks,” said high school principal Carol Johnson, “I like that you put some thought into it.

Everyone who has spoken has done an excellent job.

“Kids listen to y’all. We [faculty and staff] talk some, but you [seniors] talking to the students is a bonus.

“I think it is really important that as students mature in the Lord,” Johnson said. “They share their stories with others. Who knows who will change their behaviors and their heart?”

This ties into what the Chapel planning committee has really focused on: emphasizing the importance of faith and worship of the Lord. More specifically, how do we, as believers, grow in our faith with the Lord?

“We are teaching the gifts we need to add to our life,” said Johnson, “but we are doing it in such a way that we meet your ‘today’ needs.”

Chapel has greatly improved over the past year, but no one admits it has been perfected.

Many students, faculty, and staff have all agreed that the spirit of chapel continues to be a work in progress, much like our individual walks with Christ.

“It’s hard to say because you get out of it what you put into it,” said junior Dylan Sloan. “You have to make people want to put more in.”

“I know it will be meaningful to the people who want it to be meaningful and through repetition we start to move hearts closer to God,” Montier added.

One consensus is clear: there’s no simple three-step process to chapel perfection. Students come to BCS from many different cultures, religions and backgrounds. Challenges persist for all who sin, which we know is all of humanity.

Fortunately, the Lord has blessed Brentwood with an excellent, God-honoring faculty that will not be deterred from His calling.

Towards the end of an interview with Ames Peterson, a sophomore, he started sharing lots of new ideas that could be incorporated into chapel. The interview turned more into a light-hearted debate, rather than a conversation for a quote.

Peterson discussed Christian beliefs and faiths, the point and mood of chapel, and Christian education. Coach Rick Owens additionally joined in to share his opinions. As the debate drew to a close, Owens said this:

“I think the main point of chapel is to enable you to have conversations like that.”

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: *Bolu Bayo-Ajayi*

THE BEAR FACTS MARCH 2025

*Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2025.*

# Service, wisdom hallmarks of senior's time at BCS

By Karlee Lawrence

You might have seen him with the basketball team or speaking up in chapel. Maybe you've seen him dancing with the Bella Bros or leading pep rallies with his Claw Crew team. Perhaps you've even seen him walking around the halls making a friend or two laugh.

Bolu Bayo-Ajayi has made an impact all over campus at Brentwood Christian School, whether it is the basketball court or in the classroom.

His adventurous and bright personality has led him to participate in a wide matrix of high school activities such as student leadership, National Honor Society, Claw Crew, sports, chapel, and even theater arts.

"Bolu was very helpful during the musical and a great asset to the department," director and staff member Corey Jennings said. "I can't wait to have him helping again this year."

There is very little that Bolu has not graced with his diligent and cheerful attitude at BCS.

Bolu Bayo-Ajayi enrolled at Brentwood in 2021, arriving in the United States from Nigeria before his freshman year of high school. Ever since Bolu's first appearance on campus, the school has been changed for the better.

"If I could describe Bolu in one word it would be excellent," said BCS boys basketball coach Dustin Karrer. "He truly is an amazing young man to work with."

Bayo-Ajayi spends a lot of his time in the Athletic Center, putting up shots with fellow teammates and pushing himself to excel on the court. He spends countless hours on the sport he loved, even practicing during the summer time.

After suiting up for the JV and varsity for three years, he concluded his on-court career entering his senior year of high school and switched to a role behind the scenes. Known as the boys basketball operations manager, Bolu has taken on a larger role within the organizational framework of basketball.

Though he no longer steps foot on the court in a jersey he has a huge impact on the players and coaching staff. Bolu helps the team by recording stats, helping lead practices and exercises, equipment

managing, and overall being there for his teammates.

"He has played a major part in our success this season," Karrer added. "We wouldn't be the same program without him."

"[Between] his resilience and intellect along with his desire for excellence, I know he will do great

things in life."

Karrer also described the senior as passionate in what he does and loyal to his teammates. Bolu has said he enjoys the role and enjoys still being a part of the team and game days.

Bolu is also a natural born leader. He is known for holding others accountable and being a role model for the underclassmen of the team. You can find him staying late after practice helping his teammates put up shots or even trying to help younger players learn the sport he loves.

He does everything for the team, finding things that need to be done and keeping his compatriots mo-



hard to make sure the seniors have an incredible and memorable year. He has helped increase participation in pep rallies leading the class of 2025 to four consecutive spirit stick wins.

Bayo-Ajayi also served as treasurer for the previous two years, helping his fellow leaders conduct an incredible junior-senior. He was highly involved in the planning of the extravagant event, and was highly concerned about an upgrade in the menu.

With his perseverance, Bolu helped conduct the night with grace and was enthusiastic about the outcome.

While treasurer, he also aided in planning and conducting class meetings as well as picking senior shirts. A multi-talented human, his experience in theatre also brought joy to others as he smiles and entertains with joy written on his face.

"He was very helpful with moving the very difficult set pieces," senior Reid Alexander said. "He was a great guy to work with."

Finding someone that connects all different kinds of people is not an easy task. From bringing together athletes and theater kids, to classmates and teachers, Bolu is the perfect example of a Christ-centered student who cheers others on to do their best.

While not someone who was raised at Brentwood, Bolu is someone Brentwood will sorely miss upon graduation.

Future generations of BCS students who have had the opportunity to know Bolu and learn from his wisdom and viewpoints are blessed and lucky.

Spiritually, Bolu is a leader for the senior class as well. When talking during senior-led chapels, anyone can see the knowledge he possesses, and the authority with which he carries himself.

While others might take advantage of the influence they have on others, Bolu chooses to unite, rather than to degrade.

He is a constant light on the school's campus and is always ready to lend a helping hand. Bolu is selfless and caring, being an excellent example of what a Brentwood student should strive for.

"You don't meet anyone who doesn't like Bolu," said Connor White, BCS boys assistant coach and Bolu's coach on JV. "He's a friend to all. He's a face of the school and the school's mission."

# Choir teacher elevates Brentwood's spirit

By Isabella Parra

When Yen-Ching Chiu first heard about Brentwood Christian School, she didn't think she was the right fit for the job. Over the past year-plus, though, she has flourished at BCS and become a beloved member of the faculty. Chiu grew up in Taiwan and graduated from



Yen-Ching Chiu

Taipei National University of the Arts with a degree in Vocal Performance. She then came to Texas State University in San Marcos to receive her masters. Shortly after, she and her husband moved to Washington, D.C., though she felt out of place.

"God, let me move back to Austin," Chiu remembers praying. "I heard a little voice telling me, [going to Brentwood Christian] is the thing you need to do."

Students are grateful that Chiu came to Brentwood. The choir department at Brentwood had undergone many different leaders and various struggles before her arrival, but Chiu is proud of the progress they've made.

Students agree.

"We were switching a lot of teachers," Tanner Clark, a senior, recalled. "The [teachers] we had were really good, but they weren't professional in their field. So we couldn't spend as much time polishing everything."

Now, Encore and Choir has almost been completely turned around. The former has been given a class period and moved out of "zero hour," allowing for more cohesion.

"Having a stable capable director has really

improved the choir," said senior Jack Copeland. "I hope Mrs. Chiu stays on for a long time."

BCS agrees.

"She was a highly qualified voice teacher who also loved Brentwood and the vision of Brentwood," said Fine Arts director Jason Montier.

Not only is she an extremely qualified teacher, but she is also incredibly beloved and the heart of the department.

"[What I love most is] her energy," Encore member and senior Asia Anderson said. "It's really welcoming and if I walk in there upset my mood will definitely change from the moment I walk in there to the moment I walk out."

She loves to hand out tiny plastic ducks and toys for good work. Even elementary school students will whisper and get excited about the prizes they can earn one day when walking near the choir room.

But make no mistake - Chiu has high standards for excellence.

"She is very demanding of us," said Copeland. "If it's not quite right she pushes us to do better and we [always] sound better as a

whole."

"Just a couple days ago she was working with me on my solo song in the musical," said Clark. "She helped me give some characterization of how you can sound through your singing. "[Characterization] is much more difficult to do when you are singing. You must [have a] more pinpoint quality. She told me to use warmth and I feel that has enabled me to form that character [as Tinman]."

In addition to the musical, where Chiu is the lead director for song, she teaches fourth through eighth graders, music history, and music theory. In her (lack of) spare time, Chiu hosts the Cultural Appreciation Club.

Gratitude for her work ethic and kindness continue to grow.

"I am really looking forward to how the choir will continue to go," said Clark. "I would love to attend any future concerts whenever I get the chance. . . I would like to see how passing on the torch goes for future classes."

"I can't wait to hear the people [sing] who have had Mrs. Chiu for seven years," added Copeland.

# Freshman class short story winner

*Staff Note: Mrs. Rektenwald's English I classes drafted, revised and published short stories during the fall semester, working on understanding and using effective literary techniques while crafting an engaging narrative. This year's winner was freshman Anna Kostas, with her short story, "Coils." Below is an excerpt from the winning piece.*

"Lennox! Hey!"

My head snapped up. I saw Cal waving at me from a few trees away. His bright blue eyes were sparked with excitement.

"Hey, I'm glad I caught you out here," he said with a grin, "I feel like I haven't seen you in forever."

"Yeah, well, I've been busy I guess," I muttered. Now that he mentioned it, I hadn't seen any of my friends in a while. The centipede ticked. Cal's eyes briefly dropped down to the centipede, and a quick look of anxiety cracked through his cheerful smile. Cal never really got

used to the centipede. He had seen the lurker, but I guessed it was different when there was

actually a creature with us all the time.

"So, how's it going," Cal said awkwardly.

"Fine I guess," I grumbled. I couldn't help

the agitated response.

"Look, Lenny, I guess I'm really wanting to know, is everything alright? I just feel like you haven't been all there is all. You can tell me anything," Cal blurted.

"It's fine, Cal. Nothing's wrong. Get off my case will you!" I snapped. What had gotten into me? I didn't know why I was being so defensive. Alongside me, the centipede reared taller.

"I'm just asking if you're alright, Lenny! Gosh, why do you have to get like this?" Cal said, frowning his brow, turning his eyes a colder shade of blue. What did he mean by that?

"Get like what? If you have something to say, just say it!" I said.

"You just—you've been hard to talk to lately. You're always distant and every word seems to irritate you," Cal admitted. The centipede dug its sharp legs into my neck.

"I've already told you! It's the centipede, not me, who's annoyed," I said.

"Oh, really? Cause you don't seem like you're having a blast either," Cal snorted.

"You know what? It was a mistake coming to talk to you. I'm going home," I snarled.

And I did just that. I turned and walked back,

not giving a cent of attention to what Cal said after

me. I got inside and slammed the door shut. Immediately, I noticed that the house was quieter

than usual. Dad wasn't home. He'd slipped out while I had gone, probably to get a few sodas

from the nearby gas station.

Before I could get much farther, something on our small dinner table caught my eye. It was a letter, and it had my name written on the back. The centipede shifted slightly. I walked

over and inspected it. It wasn't the cleanest paper, but it was nice enough compared to the backdrop of my small, unkempt house. My eyes drifted up to the return address. My eyes barely

had a chance to read the name before they widened to saucers. The centipede let out a nasty

squeal. Millions of questions raced through my mind, but at the top, was the question why. It was for one simple reason.

The card was sent by my mother.

My mind was racing through the conflict of whether to rip the envelope open or to just



Anna Kostas

stare.

Just as the noise between my brain and the centipedes hiss began to peak the chaos around me, the door unlocked. Dad and the lurker came through the door, bag in hand and keys rattling.

"I see you're home early—" he began, but cut off as soon as he saw the envelope.

For the full piece, visit <https://tinyurl.com/4f47dhnj>

# Swim breaks BCS records

By Ella Kennedy

The Brentwood Christian School varsity swim team has had an immense year: boys winning the regional meet and placing third at state, a swimmer signing with a NCAA Division II school, and all competing well at a higher level



**Diving In** The boys swim team dives into district, reaching regionals and further even, state later on. Their success is shown in the string of medals and awards that they brought back to Brentwood after their amazing 24-25 season.

of competition in TAPPS.

“It has been a great season,” said head coach Jason Montier. “Four years ago there were two boys on the swim team and this year we won regionals.”

At the regional meet, the boys had three podium finishes in their relays, all of which advanced to state. They placed first in the 200 yard freestyle relay along with second in the 200 yard medley and third in the 400 yard freestyle.

Seniors Reid Alexander, Gus Ebner, and Jackson Berger, junior Gavin Edmondson, sophomore Evan Berger, and freshman Chayce Lee all contributed to the relays.

The girls team also placed in the regional meet, bringing back a third-place win. Senior Jennifer Montier was the overall meet high scorer for the second year in a

row. She placed first in the 100 meter butterfly, as well as first in the 100 yard backstroke.

The entire team had to persevere and work hard to get where they ended up. Due to the fact that BCS does not have a pool for its swim team, the team had to face the difficulties of 5 a.m. practices in Round Rock before school.

“We all had to have determination and perseverance to get to where we did,” said Jennifer Montier. “It’s always a struggle to have to get up super early and jump in a cold pool.”

The girls relays also did well at the regional meet. They placed second in the 200 yard freestyle race, as well as third in the 400 yard freestyle. Jennifer Montier, along with sophomores Gracyn Mayle and Zoe Ruiz, and freshman Allison Nelson-Cook contributed in these relays.

“The team is really fun,” said Ruiz. “We have a lot of good swimmers and competitors.”

After competing well at regionals the team traveled to San Antonio for the TAPPS state meet, where they once again made a strong showing.

The boys placed third overall, right behind Frassati Catholic School and Bay Area Christian School. Key events included the boys’ 200 medley relay, where Alexander, Jackson

Berger, Ebner, and Edmondson earned a bronze medal with a time of 1:51.79. They also placed fourth in the 200 freestyle relay, with Lee joining the team of Jackson Berger, Evan Berger, and Ebner.

Individually, Alexander had strong finishes in the 200 and 500 freestyle, while Ebner, Jackson Berger, and Edmondson also earned top 10 spots in their respective events.

“We did very well, and I’m very proud of the way we swam and competed,” said Jackson Berger.

For the girls, Jennifer Montier capped off her high school career with a bronze medal in the 100 butterfly, while Nelson-Cook earned her own bronze in the 500 freestyle. Montier also placed fourth in the 100 backstroke, and Nelson-Cook joined her in securing points for the team in their relays, helping the girls place 11th overall.

This season marks a major milestone for the Brentwood Christian swim program, as they have not only overcome logistical challenges but also achieved great success in the pool. With the foundation set, the Bears are looking forward to even greater achievements in the years to come.

# Soccer works through tough season

By Ava Cavada

The Brentwood Christian School varsity boys soccer team finished off their 2024-25 season by leaving a strong legacy of Christ-like sportsmanship, resilience, and teamwork. Despite the numerous challenges of being in the TAPPS 5A this season, the Bears kept their heads up high, ultimately reflecting the shared greatness they feel as part of the program.

The season kicked off with high hopes, as the Bears had many returners from the previous season, including seniors Jack Weston and Gino Burke and juniors Jacob Valladares and Liam McGaughy, as well as a handful of skillful newcomers eager to play.

Two early season victories against Veritas Academy had the team excited for district play, but a tough schedule and heavy travel load proved difficult for the team to overcome in missing the postseason.

A highlight performance of the season was the boys’ district game against Bish-

op Dunne on Jan. 24. They fought hard and showed determination despite playing against a tough opponent, ultimately losing in a penalty shootout.

According to head coach Cash Miller, the Bears’ motto for the season was, “Win with class, lose with dignity,” which was on full display against Dunne and throughout the season.

This season saw outstanding performances from all players, including the three seniors, Weston, Burke and Gavin McBride, who will be missed.

“Listen to coach Cash and take the upperclassmen’s advice and you’ll do good,” Burke said about advice for the returners. “Also, put in the hours on your own time, that’s what separates the good players from the great.”

The team was able to learn many skills and achieve many personal goals this season, including the personal lessons and life skills of navigating being part of a larger group and facing adversity head-on.

“I learned that soccer builds character and it is- really important to be

with your team and lean on each other,” said freshman Njenga Kinuthia.

During their season, many weeks were booked with two to three games a week. However, the Bears continued to practice at least three times a week, and conditioned many of those days.

Looking ahead to next year, a great group of juniors show promising potential they already brought into the 24-25 soccer season. Many underclassmen show amazing leadership skills as well,

as the Bears team will undoubtedly make use of going into the 25-26 school year.



**Man On!** The boys soccer team, led by their encouraging seniors, including Gino Burke(4), show determination by putting pressure on the opposing team.



## Girls basketball wraps

By Cam Cunningham

This year, the Brentwood Christian School girls basketball team had a remarkable season, making it to the playoffs and finishing with an 11-17 record going into the playoffs. The Lady Bears missed the playoffs last season, but earned the fourth seed from TAPPS 2-5A this year, finishing the season with a loss to now state champion Midland Christian.

However, the season was not without its challenges, especially with a major loss to their roster due to injuries.

Zaniah Williams, the senior Lady Bear and team captain, suffered an ACL tear that ended her season early. Despite this setback, the team remained focused and resilient.

“When Zaniah got hurt, we had to keep the hustle and spirit up,” said sophomore Ella Kennedy.

Kennedy, the team’s other captain, stepped up alongside fellow sophomores Anu Oguntade and Ella Crouch.

A key factor to the team’s success this year was the freshmen talent; they brought

fresh energy and enthusiasm to the team, including Ari Rainelli and Kat Morgan, among others.

“We had a young team this season and a strong start to the year, but unfortunately, injuries affected us after that,” added Ethan Grant, assistant coach of the Lady Bears this season. “But those injuries allowed the young players to step into their roles and do things they weren’t entirely comfortable with.

“When they become juniors and seniors, this experience will greatly benefit them.”

Each year the team assigns a motto to practice and strive for. This year’s motto for the Lady Bears was “God is greater than the highs and lows.”

Despite the challenges, the Lady Bears carried this motto with them through every victory and setback, showing resilience, growth, and faith throughout the season.

“It reflects our lives,” said Grant. “When good things happen, you give glory to God, and when bad things happen, you still have to give glory to God.

“I hope that all of our players learn from that and continue to give glory to God.”

## Girls soccer battles, improves

By Addison Everline



**Banger** Senior Charis McGaughy(10) and her fellow teammates battle against Regents, fighting for possession over the soccer ball. Even throughout their difficult season playing tough opponents, the Lady Bears refused to give up on any game.

The Brentwood Christian School girls soccer team had its run come to a close at the end of the 2024-25 regular season. Despite not achieving the outcome they wanted, the team still found ways to flourish in positivity and teamwork.

A large number of graduates in 2024 led to this season presenting various challenges; namely, the integration of younger talent filling in at every level of the field. Struggles were present, but the group believes progress was evident from start to finish.

“Having a lot of new players made it challenging to learn how to play as a team, but we improved so much from the beginning of the season, even on an individual basis,” said senior Mia Robertson.

Weather and cancellations knocked the team out of some early-season non-district matchups, but a pair of ties versus Veritas Academy had the team excited for district play.

With perennial powerhouses Brook Hill, Regents and Tyler Grace Community all part of the district, the program knew it would be tough.

“My goal for the team this year was not in wins or losses, or goals scored, but was to get one percent better each day,” said head coach Emma Hinson.

A lingering injury to senior Eden Peterson was a setback the team dealt with throughout district play, but the team was proud of its consistent effort and improvement in the face of adversity.

The district season finished with a 1-6 record, but a highlight was the lone victory, which featured a late-game goal from sophomore Ellie Walters to defeat Cristo Rey.

Considering the jump in competition to TAPPS 5A, the Lady Bears exited the season optimistic about their growth. Although many games had a close score, a struggle for the team was playing against girls with more experience and keeping up with fast-paced gameplay.

The squad will undoubtedly miss the contributions of its four seniors: Robertson, Peterson, Maeryn McCormick, and Charis McGaughy.

“The seniors meant a lot to me,” said sophomore Henley Magee. “I was a new member of the team and they made me feel so confident and welcomed.”

Hinson noted the team will miss their leadership and dedication moving forward, and hopes her returning athletes will push harder to plug gaps which include game awareness and team defending.

## Track sprints into 2025

By Grey Nyby

With track and field season starting up again, Brentwood Christian School boys and girls runners have high hopes to defend third and first-place finishes, respectively, from the 2024 season. With a handful of meets already in the books, returns have the teams optimistic about advancing a high number of athletes to state once again.

The boys track and field head coach is David Waters. He is looking forward to the boys being able to perform at their highest level while hoping to see individual athletes grow.

“I look forward to our returning lettermen this season,” said Waters.

Among those returners are juniors Gabe Washington, Trey Campbell, Brayden Jennings, Dylan Sloan, and Joshua Gonzales, as well as seniors Griffin Smith, Hollis Harlan and Conor Schehl.

Gonzales, who set the school record for discus last year, recently set the school record for shot put on March 6 in Taylor. The group has a high number of talented sprinters and will look to put together strong relays for the dis-

trict and regional meets.

Katie Smith, the head track coach on the girls side expects change for the team as they lost eight seniors from last year’s championship team.

Smith believes that athletes such as Harper and Hailyn Counts are bound to excel after an offseason of extra work. Both figure to be top-five competitors in the 1600 and 3200 races at each meet.

Elsewhere, sophomore Ava Johnson returns after aiding the Bears’ in multiple relays as a freshman and will look to assert herself alongside underclassmen such as sophomores Anu Oguntade and Skyla Jimenez.

As far as seniors go, Afton Harlan is the elder stateswoman on the squad and is hoping to contribute in both hurdles and throwing events, as well as mentally in a leadership role.

“I’m ready to kill it for senior year,” said Harlan.

The next big meet for the team is April 10, which is the TAPPS 2-5A district meet. Regionals and state will follow on April 24 and May 2, respectively.

## Golf small but strong

By Karlee Lawrence

The Bears and Lady Bears golf teams have started off their season with a handful of exciting tournaments. The team started off their season with a smaller tournament at ColoVista on Feb. 12. This was more of a beginner friendly tournament, where BCS only took a select few golfers.

When looking at the growth of the Bears golf team, it has a roster full of new golfers who are new to the sport as well as a few returning individuals. The returning players for the Boys team consist of seniors Jack Fluitt and Ralph Castillo, and juniors Liam McGaughy and Grey Nyby.

Fluitt last season was a couple places off of qualifying for the regional tournament and will bring his experience to lead the team.

The Lady Bears team consists of senior Karlee Lawrence, and sophomores Renee Groomes and Peyton Tucker. Though the team is small, there is great leadership and many practices to improve. A small

group is not necessarily a weakness.

Looking at accomplishments from last year's team, Lawrence took second in district last year, making first team all district as well as receiving first team all state as an individual.

Though the Lady Bears don't have a full team, they are hoping to place as individuals and make it to the state tournament.

The main goals for the young team is to learn and develop a skill set they could use for the rest of their life.

"I hope the team learns from this season and strives to be better," head coach Rick Owens said. "Golf is something they can use in their future professions and is an important life tool."

The team is in high hopes of having a successful season.

With the realignment of districts this year the golf teams will match up with past rivals Regents and Hyde Park, as well as some newer schools in the Dallas area. This exciting competition will be sure to fuel interesting matches and exciting games.

## E-Sports attract attention

By Alex Schehl

Brentwood welcomes E-Sports once again this year. E-Sports has been with Brentwood since 2021, playing in difficult leagues behind the scenes.

E-Sports is competitive video gaming, where players compete individually or in teams, featuring tournaments and organized leagues.

The E-Sports team meets remotely over Discord every Monday at 6 p.m. Players practice, strategize, and compete in games like Super Smash Bros. Ultimate and Fortnite.

During sessions, they focus on refining gameplay mechanics, adapting strategies, and collaborating as a team. E-Sports coach Robert Fleming emphasizes mentorship through replay analysis, tailored strategy sessions, and fostering resilience.

Typical practice sessions begin by setting goals and energizing the group, then followed by breakout sessions where squads drill tactics for the week's matches.

This year's E-Sports team consists of a strong group of middle and high schoolers: freshmen Sarah Echols, and Joel Munoz, eighth graders Aiden Clapp, Quentin McGowan, Max Pedini, Judhah Lytle, and Grayson Page, seventh grader Hezekiah Ryna, and sixth grader Braden Howard.

Official BCS competitive seasons began Feb. 10 and run through to mid-April, aligning with statewide school E-Sports leagues.

With the team now well into their season, many practices and games have already taken place, with many more to come.

Whether celebrating wins or learning from losses, Fleming makes sure to help the team improve and practice for the next match.

"At its core, our program is about building camaraderie, sportsmanship, and a love for competitive growth—all while having fun and fostering what it means to live a Christ-like example, even when playing games online," said Fleming.

## Baseball enters season with bases loaded

By Ella Kennedy

The Brentwood Christian school baseball team is starting the season strong, showing early promise as they work to build a solid foundation for the year. After

losing six key seniors from last season, the Bear's goal for this season is growth and teamwork, determined to compete with the tough district teams ahead.

Head coach Charles Bollinger and the players are working hard to improve on the fundamentals of the game and developing the chemistry needed to succeed.

"Our main goal is to focus on getting better—throwing, catching, hitting, and the fundamentals of the game," said Bollinger. "We're in a rebuilding phase, but we've got a lot of potential if we can continue to improve."

The team faces a challenging district schedule this year, with the defending state champions and several other strong

teams in the mix. Despite this tough competition, the Bears are confident in their ability to compete and grow as a team.

"We're going to keep working hard and supporting each other as we build something special here," returning junior Jack Henry Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez also emphasized the importance of maintaining a positive environment within the team.

"The environment has to stay positive," Gonzalez said. "We know there's going to be a lot of tough teams, but if we can support each other and keep a positive attitude, it'll make everything on the outside easier."

"I love being able to be around good friends and teammates, but overall just being around good people and baseball gives me that," said sophomore Drake Jackson.

Jackson loves the camaraderie within the team and believes the positive relationships help push everyone to do their best.

One area the team is working hard on is building a positive and supportive environment, having many new faces and underclassmen players, Bollinger believes fostering a good team culture is just as

important as improving their skills on the field.

"I want the team to stick together, play as teammates, and support each other through the highs and lows," Bollinger explained. "When someone makes a mistake, it's important to help them up and offer encouragement. That's how we build a strong team."

Beyond just teaching baseball, Bollinger is committed to helping his players grow as individuals.

"I want them to focus on being good people first," Bollinger said. "I want them to play the game the right way, and do it with strong character and integrity. They're already great young men, so I don't have to teach them that. They just need to continue to play hard and respect the game."

For the players, this season is about working together and honoring the gifts they've been given.

As the Bears prepare for the upcoming district competition, they continue to develop their skills and chemistry to be able to take on their tough district opponents.



**Strike!** Junior Tanner Hunka bats up to attempt to get a hit on the ball, ready. With tough competition, Hunka sets a great example for the concentration and determination needed for baseball.

# Cheer shouts for spirit

By Anu Oguntade

The BCS cheer team began its 2024-25 season with a new coaching staff that showed lots of growth from the previous season.

This season, the cheer team welcomed Kris Worley as a new varsity head coach, Worley coached the middle school cheer team last season, but after the previous coach Julie Ann Harper left, Worley took on the job.

“We grew closer as a team and really improved our skills and strengthened our bond,” said sophomore Liora Naidu.

The cheer team has shown spirit from the field to the court, and the energy they bring positively impacts the sporting environments.

One of the biggest parts of the cheer season is homecoming week, and the cheer team did not disappoint with their performance at the pep rally and through hyping up the crowd during the game. The cheer team has shown lots of growth, due to their diligence and dedication.

The squad competed in the TAPPS 5A cheer competition on December 9th in Belton. Despite the results, they left the competition with senior Katy Stromberg and junior Claire Morris winning first team all state; freshman Mar-

garet Banks getting second team all state, and sophomore Liora Naidu receiving honorable mention.

To raise money for all the events, the cheerleaders hold an annual Little Bear Cheer Camp. This is an amazing experience for elementary aged girls to learn cheers, stunts, and tumbling all while having fun.

The Cheer team will unfortunately lose five seniors, Jenna Fleming, Afton Harlon, Allie Landry, Maeryn McCormick, and Stromberg. These girls have shown leadership and served as an example to the underclassmen on the team.

“I will miss the energy the seniors bring to the team, they have shown us so much kindness, and I have so many good memories with them,” said sophomore Ellie Walters.

Next year the team has

hopes of improving in the competition and they want to continue looking for ways to bring joy to the Brentwood community.

“If you like to support your friends, have lots of school spirit, and are willing to learn routines, cheering is for you,” said Worley.



**Red Hot!** Senior Allie Landry(front middle) leads sophomores Ellie Walters(far left) and Liora Naidu(far right), and Scarlet Harlan(middle back) in their chants to boost school spirit!

## Bears commit to College

Staff Report

The Class of 2025 is nearing its final days of high school, and that includes athletics; however, for at least two Brentwood Christian School students, the journey will continue in collegiate athletics.

Senior football player Victor Koncaba (Angelo State University) and senior swimmer Jennifer Montier (Henderson State University) recently signed their National Letters of Intent to compete at the next level.

Koncaba, the TAPPS II-District 2 Offensive Player of the Year, joins the Rams' football team and will compete for a spot on the offensive line. He was a four-year starter on both sides of the ball for the Bears' football team, and a perennial all-district and all-state player.

Montier, who added another TAPPS state swimming medal (bronze in 100 butterfly) to her resume at this year's competition, will be heading to Arkansas to join the Reddies' swim program. Her two-year stint as a BCS swimmer has produced a litany of medals and school records that will likely stand for some time in program lore.

For more, Visit [bcsathletics.com](http://bcsathletics.com)

## Softball pushing for growth

By Graham Auberger

The BCs softball team is coming off a previous winning season in the 23-24 school year, and is looking to see what they can do in a tougher, 5A division with a new head coach.

The 2025 softball team is mostly a brand new group, losing seven starters from the 2024 team. There are a total of seven freshmen, two sophomores, and two juniors this season. Sophomore Ella Kennedy and Junior Reese Hertel are the only returning players this season.

“I am excited for our returners, Ella and Reese, to have a bigger role,” said assistant coach, Ethan Grant. “I am also excited for our new players, and to see how we can compete in 5A.”

Brentwood is now competing in a stronger division, where the team will play teams like Hyde Park, Brook Hill, and Grace Community School.

“Competing in 5A is going to be tough,” said Kennedy. “One of the teams in our district this year beat us in the playoffs round and we also have a very new team, so it's going to be a growing and learning year.”

“We are going to have to depend and lean on

each other more than ever.”

The new head coach for Brentwood softball is Efrain Contreras. Ten years prior, Contreras worked at Brentwood as the head baseball coach and assistant head coach for the volleyball team. He also was a high school Spanish teacher working a total of seven years at Brentwood. Contreras wanted to get back into coaching and teaching at a Christian school, and when Paul Sladek gave him an opportunity to come back when leaving the softball team earlier in the school year, he felt like it was an answered prayer.

“It is different then when I was here at first, but they [Brentwood] does a good job of conserving culture and it made it an easy transition for me,” Contreras said.

Some of his goals for the season are developing the new players and getting the players excited for the season.

Reigning co-district champs' next game is Tuesday, March 25 versus East Austin College Prep. Their first district game is a double header against Brook Hill on March 28. Brentwood is excited for this spring softball season, and pray that it will be a season full of hardwork and growth.

## Tennis serves up with fire

By Kenton Auberger

Brentwood's tennis season is swinging back into action. The team has seven tournaments scheduled for 2025 with their first taking place back on Feb. 13 at Hyde Park.

The team practices during the week at Tom Glenn High School in Leander. Although no seniors are currently in the Tennis program, the team has many underclassmen that show great potential and a drive for success.

Players include sophomore Lauren Swayze, sophomore Lily Duong, freshman Abigail Wood, freshman Jeslyn Gomez and freshman Julia Alexander on the girls side, and sophomore Ames Peterson for the boys.

Junior Lily Wright brings up the head of the girls side of the team, being the only upperclassman.

“Tennis is the brightest sport to me and it is good for me to meet new people and talk to other people which I like doing while also playing a, sport I love and enjoy,” said Peterson.

Head coach Terry Osborne and the players are really excited and looking forward to the rest of the season. An encouraging season of Tennis is on the horizon, and the new group of student athletes bring a positive attitude to the sport.

“In my second year at Brentwood I'm discovering there's definitely more interest in tennis than last year,” Osborne said.

The two major upcoming tournaments for the team include the district tournament on March 27 and Onion Creek Tournament on March 29. Should any players qualify as individuals or doubles partners for state, the TAPPS tournament will be held in April.

“I am excited to get on the courts and reach our full potential,” Osborne said. “The main goals are to have fun competing and meeting new teams.”

“My goals this season are to get better at tennis, learn more about the sport, meet new people, win more and do better at tournaments,” added Peterson. “I believe that our team will have a great season this year.”

# Bellas recapture state

continued from page 1

work through tough challenges and obstacles,” Cavada said.

“I said at the beginning of the year that this is my best overall team, and they really are,” said Lisa Warner, direc-

tor of the Bellas. “They just keep going to the next level. I’m also not losing any seniors, so that’s exciting.”

Although the Lady Bellas placed themselves at the top of the 5A leaderboard, there are still many things to look forward to regarding the remainder of their season. The team’s Spring Showcase is coming up in April, and tryouts for the 2025-26 season recently wrapped with a strong crop of incoming freshmen in the mix.

Brentwood Christian is extremely proud of the Lady Bellas and their hard fought wins at competition and remain excited to see what next year will bring.



**Gold Medal** The Lady Bellas make BCS proud winning state for the second year in a row. Led by the three crucial juniors on the team, the weeks of practice and hard work pay off.

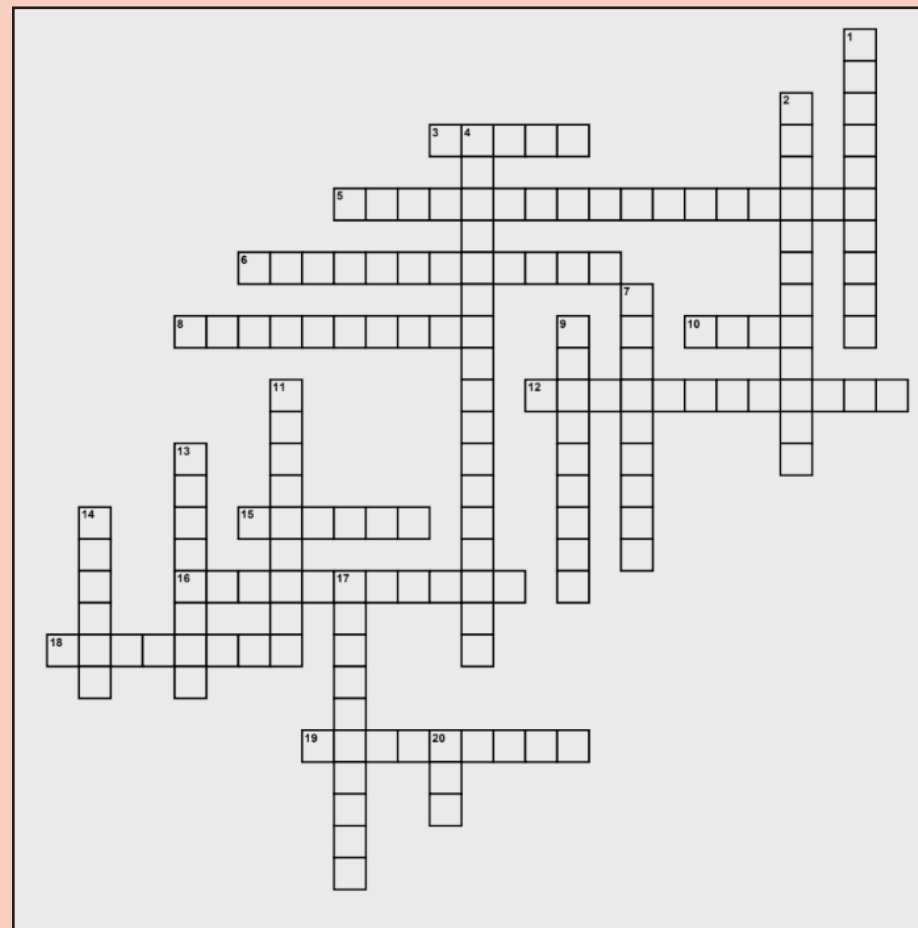
# Spring musical a hit



**The wizard of Oz** Seniors Tanner Clark(left), Reid Alexander(right), freshman Hollis Leeward(middle left), and junior Emma Kent(middle right) animatedly sing in the spring musical, “The Wizard of Oz.” For more about the musical, see the next addition of the Bear Facts.

# Crossword

By Alex Schehl



**Theme: BCS Events**

**ACROSS:**

- 3. Donuts and Mentors
- 5. Fundraising auction
- 6. A week of Thanks
- 8. Big football event
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_ the teachers (before school starts)
- 12. > parents
- 15. School is out!
- 16. March time off
- 18. Spirit stick
- 19. Autumn respite

**DOWN:**

- 1. Easter special
- 2. Halloween special
- 4. Jogging for donations
- 7. Hosting visitors
- 9. After midterms
- 11. All \_\_\_\_\_ chapel
- 13. Pants reward
- 14. Wednesday regular
- 17. Farewell seniors!
- 20. Austin city limits