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VOL. 26 NO. 1

BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

OCTOBER 2013

IN SHORT

Ashley Campbell born

Ashley Collins Campbell was born on Wednesday, Aug. 28, to English teacher Chloe Campbell, weighing 8 lbs., 9 oz. Grandmother Deborah Strickland is teaching all of her daughter's classes until fall break. She recently moved to the Austin area with her husband from Abilene, where she taught at Abilene Christian for 17 years and at a public school for another 17 years.

Policy change

This year's dress code policy change regarding outerwear has confused some students. The Student-Parent Handbook for middle school and high school students states that the "only outerwear approved for wear during school hours will be items produced by CFJ, BCS PTF, or BCS Booster Club."

Secondary principal Carol Johnson said the rule is one way to make sure no one feels inferior to anyone else because of clothing.

"My strategy is to get all the teachers on board, because we have been working on this for a while but we never really enforced it," she said.

Two new hires

Two of Brentwood's most recent hires are sixth-grade teacher Amber Kidd and staff member Jeff Morris, both of whom started in September.

Kidd, who holds degrees in communications and religious studies from York College and an M.A. in education from Phoenix University, is teaching math and Bible.

Morris serves as controller for the school, a position that has been upgraded from business manager. He earned a bachelor's in biochemistry from Abilene Christian and an MBA at Texas A&M University.

Skillful new teachers add moxie

By Maria Harris and Lauren Petrik

It's easy to pick out the new students on your first day. They're the ones with that dazed look, usually with a schedule in hand, rushing everywhere. But is it so easy to spot the new teachers?

Several new hires began at BCS in August, ready to impart the gift of wisdom to both eager and not-so-eager minds.

Adam Brown, the new Spanish I, II, and III teacher and a native Tennessean, is new to Texas. He recently earned a bachelor's degree in social sciences from Harding University, with a minor in Spanish. He enjoys following sports like college football, as well as canoeing, hiking, and playing Ultimate Frisbee.

Brown said he is excited to start contributing to the Brentwood community in a positive way. He learned about BCS through their presence at the Christian Academy Choral Festival last November.

Ashley Dargai teaches English for the sophomores and the seniors. She earned her B.A. in English at Harding and has taught high school English in Arkansas.

She met her husband J.D. on a mission trip in Europe during college.

"I believe in mission trip love," said Dargai, who admitted breaking the rule about not dating locals. "We ended up getting married, so it was OK."

In her free time she loves to cook, especially for other people. She also is a vegan

but will eat Blue Bell and pizza.

Dr. Rachel McBride of Montesdeoca, or Señora Montesdeoca, teaches Spanish to students in kindergarten through Spanish I. Born in Ecuador, she grew up there, bilingual, while her parents were missionaries.

Montesdeoca earned her Ed.D. in education from North Texas because, as she says, teaching is her passion. Asked what she is most excited for this year, she replied, "to see you all learn to have a love for the Spanish language."

Montesdeoca, who is married to Vini, enjoys spending time with her 2-year-old son, Luke, and reading.

Sierra Pierce is the new secondary science, math, and Bible teacher. She said she is very excited to get to know her students, and to see them do good work in science. Pierce has a bachelor's degree in education, life science, and Bible, and a master's degree in Christian ministry, all from Abilene Christian University.

She and her husband Brandon have two boys: Oliver, 3, and Elliott, 1. They love to go to the park, to the Children's Museum, and to the pool. Pierce loves to travel, and she spent a college semester in Oxford, England.



photos: Hannah Kwon



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Year of transition: elementary has two bosses

By Jonathon Reich

After 32 years of service to Brentwood Christian School, elementary principal Dr. Libby Weed announced last spring that she would retire after the 2013-14 school year. This began a process of interviews that took place over several months and was later referred to by school president Marquita Moss as a "nation-wide search."

Eventually, Mara Ashley was hired, joining the administration as the elementary assistant principal.

"I have a mixed feeling – some sadness in

leaving, but real happiness in knowing things are going to be in good hands," Dr. Weed said.

During these several months of interviews, Dr. Weed said she met many candidates whom she believed were not right for the position, and toward the end of the spring semester, she began feeling discouraged. But in May, when she met and interviewed with Ashley personally, Dr. Weed said she felt confident Ashley was the right person for the job.

"As soon as we finished that interview, I went over to Mrs. Moss's office and said 'I believe we've found our principal,'" Dr. Weed said. "I felt like both from looking at her experience

and from talking with her that she seemed to have the heart of a good administrator."

Ashley's main job this year is to become familiar with the school and learn what responsibilities Dr. Weed has as elementary principal. She does this by shadowing Dr. Weed during her meetings, working on projects with her, and meeting with her every day to discuss daily events. She also meets with the elementary teachers both personally and professionally, visits classrooms, and tries to learn students' names and their activities.

see Dr. Weed, page 8

Big News from Little China: Grace Cammack

New editor does hard things, experiences immense personal growth

The first question people always ask when I come back from a mission trip is, "How was it? What did you get out of it?"

What did I get out of the Dominican Republic? Bug bites. No, seriously. I don't remember a time when my legs have itched so much. I started to count how many I have but stopped when I hit 100. That was just on my left leg, too.

It's insane. I wanted to make up a cool story about them before I got back to school. They aren't mosquitos, either. I was told they are the Dominican version of chiggers. They look like gnats but they land on you, there's a bit of a sting, and then they fly away. All that remains is a little dot of blood on the surface and a red splotch of skin surrounding it. I've had them for about three months now. If you haven't had a chance to see them, I'm sure you will, because it doesn't seem like they will be going away anytime soon.

But, in more serious news, I had a really great time on my mission trip.

The first week was, well, a disappointment, mainly due to me. I was approached with a challenge and failed to meet it. I was with three other students and two adult camp counselors. The camp was located on a mountain, so every day's activity involved a hike of at least one kilometer.

FYI, hiking = not my thing. It gets old after the first day. One activity was a scavenger hunt with our clues hidden all over the mountainside. I probably climbed the mountain six times. To make it a truly rugged experience, it was raining. By the time we had collected all of the clues and completed all of the tasks, I was so done. That being said, I didn't try to connect with any of the kids on almost anything, much less a spiritual level. I learned that I am not cut out to be a camp counselor. I don't have the personality for it. However, that does not excuse my actions.

The second week was better for me, personally. We climbed off the mountain and I was more in my area of expertise, working with kids ages four to six. They were so much easier for me than the teenage campers. I really bonded with the two little girls who attached themselves to me. One was four years old and her dad had died two years prior. She spoke fluent Spanish but was supposed to be working on her English as well. I was able to help her with that. As a result of her attachment, her grandmother gave me her phone number, which I still have. The other little girl was five and was visiting from the States. She didn't speak any Spanish and so I took it upon myself to be her translator. They were both very adorable and I felt extremely needed.

In the few days after the second week we stayed at a beach house rented for the six of

us. It was a good conclusion to a rather unexpected trip.

But what did I take from all this? What did I learn? Well, God blesses all countries, not just America. I also learned that I am an extremely selfish person. I never knew that before about myself, but I am. I think we all are to a certain extent. I have yet to meet a person, when stressed and stretched, who still thinks more about the person sitting next to him than he does himself. It's interesting how much work God can do when He takes you out of your element. That's always what people say, but it's one of those things that is never understood until it has been experienced firsthand.

So what's my point? Am I endorsing anything here? Here it is: We keep ourselves from spiritual growth. We avoid the hard things, and thus cannot grow from them. I went on my trip, which I thought would be hard, but was harder than I could have ever imagined. And I grew. The only way to grow is to do hard things.

And there it is, in all of its glory. And really, it was GLORIOUS. To God be the glory.

"It's interesting how much work God can do when He takes you out of your element."

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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Seniors sing, swim, squabble, unite at retreat

By Elizabeth McKinney

Aug. 25-26 marked the last time the Class of 2014 would leave Brentwood on a retreat for two days of fun and games, goal-setting, and the inevitable bonding that comes with spending excessive amounts of time with friends.

"I was excited to see kids outside of school; people act so different when they're not at school," Hannah Kwon said.

Two buses and a van departed from BCS at 8 a.m. Saturday, carrying Brentwood's smallest class to Camp Buckner in Burnet. Accompanying the 36 seniors were class sponsors Lori Morin and J.D. Robson, as well as president Marquita Moss, secondary principal Carol Johnson, and

director of development Kevin Claypool.

Upon arrival, class president Bryce Morin led worship, and Claypool charged them with the typical responsibilities that come with being the oldest kids on campus. Then Robson orchestrated several "ice breaker" games, including Knights, Horses, and Cavaliers.

Afterwards, Moss provided the Class of 2014 with the opportunity to set goals for both their class as a whole and for individuals, and she likened their chance to inspire the younger classes to the influence of several Biblical leaders.

Then came the fun. The seniors threw on their Brentwood-approved swimsuits and dashed to the pool, eager to cool off from the brutal Texas heat. Several diving and jumping competitions ensued, including Best Belly-flop.

After dinner, the 36 were provided with instructions for the game Espionage, which required students to make their way across the totally dark camp in hopes of reaching the bonfire site without getting caught by faculty or other compromised seniors. Few students managed to not get caught, and that was only because they had inside help.

After Espionage came perhaps the most controversial portion of the entire retreat: the deciding of the class T-shirt

design, song, and verse. As everyone was already very tired, tempers were short, and soon the meeting hall was filled with irritation. All the seniors agreed it was a very stressful and needlessly emotional meeting.

"We bickered over stupid stuff," Joanna Stewart said, "which was really ironic because we were trying to decide on Bible verses and hymns."

When everything was more or less decided, the exhausted seniors retreated to their cabins. Some students' favorite part about this was the bunk beds, which the girls pushed together so they could be even closer while they chatted.

"It was like a giant sleepover!" Maysie Bartos exclaimed.

There was plenty of bonding taking place the next day as well. Jasmine Selman and Cynthia Smith took a walk and fed catfish, and many of the boys played an intense game of basketball. Also a favorite among some of the students was the Gaga Ball pit, in which many fierce competitions took place.

But on a more serious note, several of the braver seniors shared their personal struggles over the past few years, which all their classmates greatly appreciated, as the issues were relatable and "something we can use later in life; it wasn't your typical devotional," according to Stewart. She also expressed delight in the fact that she discovered new similarities between her and her friends, which even after 10 years of knowing each other, they had never discovered until now.



photo: Lori Morin

Adrift Seniors Maysie Bartos and David Powers enjoy a paddle boat on the lake during their retreat Aug. 25.

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Little orphan Annie takes stage next month

By Nicholas Bergeron

We got Annie! Brentwood will run "Annie" for five shows over two weekends at Worley Barton Theater, Oct. 25-26 and Nov. 1-2, playing twice on Nov. 2.

The two-act comedy chronicles the adventure of the titular character (junior Haley Hutson), a feisty, optimistic young girl, and her interactions with a plethora of memorable characters.

Among these are the wealthy businessman Oliver Warbucks (senior Bryce Morin and junior Tyler Clark), his kind-hearted assistant Grace Farrell (junior Kaylie Angello), the cruel orphanage manager Miss Hannigan (senior Joanna Stewart), and her brother Rooster (junior Jonathon Reich).

"Annie" will be the first "kids' show" Brentwood has put on since "Beauty and the Beast" in 2009. Theater director Cindy Singleton said it's been considered for years, but this year, thanks to parent volunteers, smarter set design and rehearsal scheduling, and a large cast of students, the musical has come together.

Perhaps the greatest force behind this year's musical has been Fine Arts Benefactors, led by president Melissa Biegert. FAB is a parent group that functions like an athletic sponsorship group for Brentwood's fine arts. They've raised funding and volunteered to help get this year's musical to be all it can.



photo: Grace Cammack

A hard-knock life Annie's orphan friends rehearse for "Annie," which the theater department will present on Oct. 25-26 and Nov. 1-2.

"They've been just incredible. (They) were the impetus behind getting volunteers," Singleton said.

Former teachers have contributed to the musical as well. Cissy Johnson is in charge of choreography, and former Kendra Dean's trained dog will play the role of Sandy.

The large cast and chorus of "Annie" have raised difficulty in scheduling rehearsals. The 14 orphans alone range from grades 6-12 and individually participate in a variety of sports. To make practice scheduling easier on students, Singleton has students attend rehearsal at various times so they don't have to wait through hours of others practicing.

Art teacher Lori Morin designed and built the set with the help of parent volunteers. This year's musical will be the first to feature revolving set pieces that can be quickly turned to show a different prop depending on the scene. For example, the radio station can be swiveled to become Roosevelt's cabinet.

The set has been finished in such a timely manner that actors can rehearse with a full set, rather than an empty stage, much earlier in the year than ever before. Morin attributed the swift preparation to the "unprecedented number of volunteers."

The major roles of the musical were cast in May, so actors could prepare over the summer. Rehearsal started shortly before the school year, and the chorus has been preparing since mid-August.

The musical was written in 1977 by Charnin, Meehan, and Shouese, based on Howard Gray's long-running, celebrated comic strip "Little Orphan Annie." An award-winning reproduction of the play has run on Broadway since January 2012. The Annie franchise was popularized by the 1982 film of the same name, which shares many songs with the play and has since become a cultural and cinematic icon.

Tickets for the show will be available online through the school website starting Oct. 15 or at the box office during both show weeks.

Freshmen make friends at retreat

By Mary Womack

Hayrides, smelly clothes, dodge ball, new friends, crazy games, lack of sleep, and tons of fun: All of these help describe the 2013 freshman retreat.

The freshman class of 51 students attended a retreat at Camp Tejas on Sep. 15-16, enjoying a time of bonding and unity.

The retreat consisted of a variety of activities, ranging from "Gaga Ball" to meaningful group discussions about how the class plans to handle their high school career. New friends were made through the challenge course, and many of the games, such as the human knot, taught the importance of communication among peers, teachers, and God.

Throughout the retreat, the freshman class was asked about their goals for the future and what an important part unity would play, not only in their high school years, but in life. Both days the freshmen built on this topic with daily devotions and speakers. This was supported by the class officers, who led a brief introduction and activity.

"We all had so much fun," class president Hope Hutson said. "I love how we get along so well!"

Four school administrators and a teacher attended the retreat with the freshmen. Class sponsor Danielle McGhee said the retreat would, "build a fresh new vision." Chloe Campbell, the other sponsor, is currently out on maternity leave.

Peytons leave BCS after eight years for Sweet-er pastures

By Jin Ha Jeong

Many people at BCS are missing a P.E. coach with a shiny bald head, soft smile, and intimate personality – a few of the things that made David Peyton so special.

"What I liked the most about him is that he is very personal with you," senior Co Ho said. "He gets to know you as a person, not just as a student in the class."

Brentwood is also losing his wife, Karen Peyton, a teacher described by students as having a motherly, hardworking, and inspirational character.

Eight years after Karen began teaching at BCS, and seven years after David started, the Peyton family has moved into their new home in Sweetwater, 40 miles west of Abilene. Coach Peyton, who taught Bible and P.E., was offered a job at a church in Sweetwater and moved there with the boys in August; Mrs. Peyton remained

at BCS until the school found her replacement.

According to Mrs. Peyton, her husband really enjoyed being a P.E. teacher, but his heart was in ministry. He wanted to be in contact with many people as he was in the Philippines, where the Peytons were missionaries for 11 years.

So during the summer, he looked for his dream job, an opportunity to be in ministry, and he got one. Coach Peyton is now serving as an outreach and equipping minister, making contacts with people throughout the community.

Mrs. Peyton, who was a sixth-grade English, Math, and Bible teacher, worked at Brentwood for eight years. She said it is very difficult to leave the school; during her final weeks students came to her class as they passed by and said they are going to miss her.

"Yes, I'm sad about leaving my students and former students, but we felt this is what God wants us to do," Mrs. Peyton said.

Jacob Peyton, the second of the Peytons' three

children, is a junior at Sweetwater High School, and his mom said he's been excited with his new classes. Philip Peyton, a seventh grader, is playing receiver on his school's tackle football team. Their daughter, Somare (BCS '11), is a junior at Lubbock Christian University.

Mrs. Peyton will work as a manager at Terry's Homemade Ice Cream and Italian Ice.

Elementary principal Dr. Libby Weed said she was impressed with Mrs. Peyton's positive outlook and enthusiasm for teaching, even when she interviewed from the Philippines.

"She turned out to be everything I knew she would be – a person who loves young people and brings out the best in them," Dr. Weed said.

Dr. Weed said she always loved watching Mr. Peyton teach an elementary P.E. class.

"He had a real gift for patient explanation and demonstration," she said. "He brought the students into the activity with great instruction. Our whole school will miss the Peytons greatly."



David Peyton

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Avery Westerlund

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Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2014.

Classy athlete rises above with faith, effort

By Madalyn Garelick

Brentwood Christian senior Avery Westerlund is a genius. She exceeds in every school subject, in being a profound leader, and in her love of volleyball. She never falls short of teachers' expectations for students but instead far surpasses them in her perseverance and willingness to do whatever it takes to earn an A. She doesn't just stop at helping herself; she will never turn down an opportunity to help another student succeed as well.

"Her commitment to what she does and willingness to help others as well is rare to find in a student at her age," says Michelle Mallett, who is the AP Biology teacher and one of Avery's favorite teachers.

Avery has attended Brentwood since kindergarten and has made herself known to the student body in many of the school's activities. She has sung in Brentwood's choir all four years of high school, she has been president of her class since her sophomore year, has been a member of NHS throughout high school, and has been a strong leader on the varsity volleyball team since her freshman year.

Avery is not just an active member at her school, but she is also a leader in the youth group at Hill Country Bible Church and is constantly looking for ways to volunteer.

"My faith has changed the way I look at situations," Avery says. "I have a much more positive outlook on life thanks to my faith."

For example, Avery loves to work with children and is involved with Backyard Bible Club at her church every summer. She doesn't take life for granted but instead enjoys the curveballs life brings every day.

One curve her parents threw her that she will never forget came after Avery and classmates Patti White and Maysie Bartos created a rap for

one of their school projects in middle school. They deleted the video soon after they turned it in to ensure no one found this embarrassing project. Little did they know, their parents had found it and would soon display it at Avery's and Patti's "Sweet 16" party.

Avery is most known at school for her active role on the volleyball court. She has been in love with volleyball since second grade

when she first began to play in recreational leagues. She moved up to playing for the club team Texas Eclipse, and soon after that joined the Brentwood team in fifth grade, known since then for her towering height and killer hits. She has been a member of varsity since her freshman year, and has played the last two with her sister Blair, a sophomore.

"Volleyball has given me a chance to be a leader and learn how to handle tough situations in a classy manner," Avery says.

Although Avery is known for her mad volleyball skills, she is also known for her academic excellence. She has always been a student who strives for every last point on every assignment she is given, and her friends and teachers have no doubt that she will continue to strive for excellence throughout her years of college and on into her career.

"Avery perseveres in everything she does," classmate Jackson Hager says. "Whether it be volleyball or school, she is always working hard to improve."

Since the first day she entered high school, Avery made it her goal to be number one in her class, and she has not fallen short of that goal.

She is currently leading the pack in the run for valedictorian.

"My goal of being valedictorian is really the only thing keeping me motivated this year,"

Avery laughingly says.

While everyone knows Avery for being great at many different things, her friends know her as a strong leader, and someone they can always count on to be bluntly honest.

"Avery is my best friend, and I can always come to her for guidance and she will listen and respond," Patti says. "She doesn't take life too seriously."

Other friends describe Avery as motivated, caring, outgoing, and welcoming. Many aspire to have Avery's perfect eyelashes or her adorable little giggle that cannot be imitated. But her trait that was mentioned most was "klutzy."

"Leave it up to Avery to fall randomly during class, or run into things while walking," classmate Ariana Marks says trying to hold back laughter.

As for Avery's future, she plans on attending UT or TCU. She is not yet sure what she wants to major in or what she wants to be her career but is just trying to soak up the last bittersweet memories of high school.

Avery says she's going to miss the family aspect of Brentwood and having the opportunity to be a part of so many different activities and making unexpected friends while doing it. She will leave Brentwood

hoping to be remembered as "a girl who works hard at everything she does and reflects Jesus while doing that."

For now, Avery is working hard alongside her volleyball team hoping to bring home a state championship.

"Winning a state championship would be the highlight of my high school years," she says, "the thing that I would remember forever."



photo: submitted

"Avery is my best friend, and I can always come to her for guidance and she will listen and respond."

Library enters partnership with college

By Samantha Mack

The secondary library is undergoing changes to its appearance as well as some internal changes, including a partnership with a college bringing greater research capabilities.

York College in Nebraska is sponsoring BCS and providing the library with access to their databases to aid in research and other projects. Development director Kevin Claypool, who received his undergrad degree

at York, contacted his alma mater to bring about this relationship.

Secondary librarian Danielle McGhee mentioned that the kinks are still being worked out but it's coming along. Secondary principal Carol Johnson revealed that the school is also working toward a technology upgrade for the computers.

Over the summer the library was also rearranged. The goal for all of the changes is to update the library to give it a 21st-century look, and to have it cater to the 21st-century learner of today, according to McGhee.

"I've been to libraries all over the world, and I want to bring a little of what I've seen

into Brentwood," McGhee said.

The bookcases were moved to one side, freeing up a large area for collaborative space. Two of the walls were painted over: One is now a bright green and the other is a light blue. And to spotlight York's support a wall decal will be put up to display their sponsorship. The library has also received new books and reference materials.

"I'm looking forward to having new energy in the library and research center," McGhee said. "I think that students (will) be more interested and enthusiastic about learning from literary and technological perspectives."



photo: Hannah Kwon

Just browsing Senior Mai Nguyen looks for a book in the newly remodeled secondary library.

Quirky campus fixtures add humor, fun for years

By Camille Sunshine

When people walk around campus and find students wearing buckets on their heads, a life-size Elvis cut-out, a suit of armor, and kids playing on a boat, they realize that Brentwood Christian is quite an interesting place.

Elvis Presley can be found in the room of Spanish teacher Adam Brown. Its original owner was Bertha Roggendorff, a retired BCS Spanish teacher. She often told her students how much she liked the King of Rock 'n' Roll, and they would often bring her Elvis collectibles. One summer, a student visited Memphis and brought the cutout back for her. It sat in her room, mostly for decoration, but every so often she would use it in her lessons.

"I would tell my students things like he was my first boyfriend, which of course was not true," she said.

When Roggendorff retired, she left it for her replacement, Efrain Contreras. Since then it has been passed among former English teacher Cindy Nestor, English teacher Chloe Campbell, former Spanish teacher Kendra Dean, and now Brown.

"I am glad to have him as part of my shrine to Tennessee," said Brown, who hails from the same state as Elvis.

Found in the back of sixth-grade teacher Becky Stewart's classroom is a yellow desk with a black cushioned seat that has motivated children for more than 30 years. Stewart uses it as a reward due to the fact that it is more comfortable than all the other plain, cushionless desks. Children who struggle with behavior get to sit in it when they do behave. The desk is a signature part of the ambiance in Stewart's room.

Stewart is also the only teacher at Brentwood who still uses a record player in her classroom. Though her current one was purchased two years ago, she has used record players for a long time, playing songs from "Jesus Christ, Superstar" and "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat." Her new record player additionally features a cassette player and a CD player. Stewart also uses an old TV, a VHS strip projector.

In humanities teacher Mel Witcher's graduation blessing to alumnus Kia Khadem last year, Witcher wore a plastic beach

bucket on his head. He was modeling Khadem, who loved to don the bucket from time to time as he walked the halls.

The bucket is one of the many hall and press passes of Bear Facts adviser Jonathan Weed. Khadem, who was on the newspaper staff, typically wore his pass instead of carrying it. Weed's previous hall pass was a plunger, but it was retired a few years ago.



photos: Hannah Kwon

Just imagine Students feel the lure of the boat.

"I like to find things that are fun and slightly embarrassing for some students," Weed said.

He hoped that they would keep students from using his passes just to get out of class.

Brentwood's developmental preschool has a mascot of its own. There is a large rabbit named Princess Freckles who runs around with the kids both at recess and indoors.

Her presence is very calming to the children. They are brought to pet the rabbit when they are crying, and it soothes them.

"It is an important part of their development to take care of an animal," preschool teacher Connie Conkle said.

Princess Freckles is the third rabbit and fifth class pet the preschoolers have had. She is a six-year-old very large white rabbit with black speckles.

Fry's Fun Farm, who has been bringing a petting zoo to the preschool annually for 20 years, donated Princess Freckles and her predecessors. The boys wanted to name her Freckles, and the girls wanted to name her Princess, so the teachers compromised.

The rabbit stays the night at the school during weekdays, but on weekends it goes home with Conkle. She is paper trained, and likes to chew on bulletin boards and masking tape.

Those who have ever been to the office of school nurse Nancy Meyer will see that she has a collection of Kooky pens, often found at grocery store checkouts. Having discovered some once, Meyer pur-

chased one and thought that it would be fun to use for kids to check out with.

A student saw her pen and suggested she collect them. Since then, Meyer has built up a stock of more than 100 pens – some purchased herself, others given to her as gifts.

Found in Witcher's room is a suit of armor that has resided there for four or five years. Its owner is government teacher Devan Loftis, who formerly taught World History. When he moved into a smaller room, he put the suit of armor in Witcher's room for the sake of space.

Loftis went to college at Harding and belonged to a social club there called Knights at Harding. In his studies of history and on his travels through Europe, Loftis developed an interest in knights.

"I was always fascinated by some of those stories of valor," he said.

Loftis found his suit of armor at Garden Ridge, but since his wife objected to him buying the big one, the one he purchased is slightly smaller than life-size.

In the lower elementary playground is a boat without a back, steering wheel, or engine, but used as a great entertainer to the younger kids. This was donated by the Craven family about 15 years ago to replace an earlier playground boat.

Rick Craven, the father, owned a boat store. He offered to donate a boat that would be totally safe for children. Since then, it has been repaired and renovated many times,

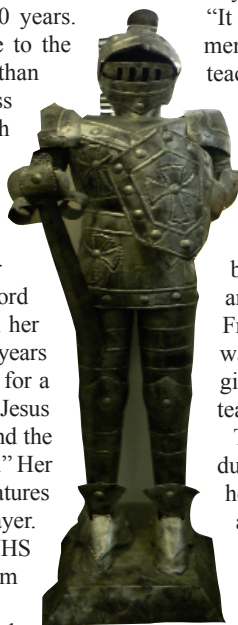
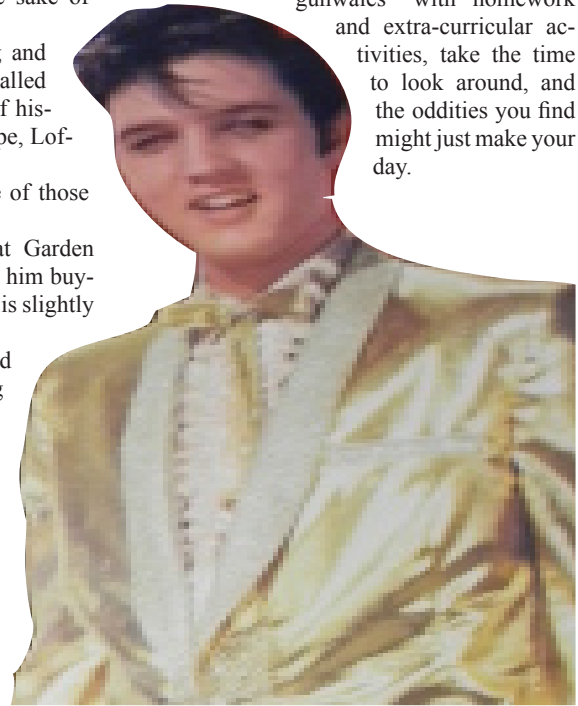
remaining a favorite to kids of all ages.

"I pretend that I am a sea dragon that swims by and eats people," first-grader Julia Sabin said.

Sabin and her friends said it is great to play on the boat, and they take care of it every day. "The kids do love it – it's just so much fun," elementary principal Dr. Libby Weed said.

The Brentwood campus is full of eclectic and unusual things that make it what it is today. Even when your schedule is "full to the gunwales" with homework

and extra-curricular activities, take the time to look around, and the oddities you find might just make your day.



photos: Hannah Kwon

Pump up my achy breaky heart J.D. Robson infused last month's magazine sales with humor and enthusiasm, entertaining students with an assortment of outrageous characters during the periodic rallies in the Athletic Center.

Three weeks from state, cross country runners improving

By Josh Sass

As the cross country season nears its midway point and runners eye the state meet on Oct. 26, BCS cross country teams have both competed in four meets. With three meets left till state, teams continue striving to improve.

In their most recent meet, the Lady Bears competed in the Cedar Park Invitational meet without one of their top runners on Sep. 21. The girls finished fifth out of the seven private schools that entered the race. Junior Haley Hutson finished ninth out of the 61 runners with a time of 14:06 on the two-mile course. Freshman Hope Hutson finished in 15:18, and sophomore Hailey Miller finished two seconds later.

The boys also competed in the Cedar Park Invitational, but without two of their top three runners. Junior Evan Herring finished 53rd out of the 123 runners, and the next four BCS runners barely finished in the top 100. The Bears finished last out of the 16 teams that competed.

Boys' cross country coach Jacob Rotich said the Bears have a lot of training to do so that the less experienced runners can place higher in meets.

"My main goal is to improve off last year," Coach Rotich said. "We have a much larger team this year but young. Besides this I still see us doing better than last year."

Last year the boys finished 11th in state against 16 other full teams. Herring was the top runner on the team, finishing 25th at state, while the next returning runner was sophomore



photo: Kevin Miller

Survival of the fittest Lady Bear runners fight for position in a recent meet. Coached by Katie Smith, the girls are hoping again to place in the state's top four.

Garrett Shake, who was 100th.

The Lady Bears went to St. Andrew's Episcopal School to compete in their invitational against 12 other private schools on Sep. 14. Freshman Haley Birt finished fourth with a time of 13:41, and Haley Hutson was 11th finishing at 14:18. Sophomore Kayla Lane, Miller, and Hope Hutson finished third, fourth, and fifth among Brentwood runners.

"We have a very young team this year but a lot of potential," girls' cross country coach Katie Smith said. "If we can all stay healthy and continue to improve, I have high expectations that we can continue our run of being a top-four team in the state."

Last year, the Lady Bears placed third in state with their top five runners finishing 13th, 14th, 15th, 17th, and 19th, but out of these five run-

ners only Haley Hutson and Miller return this year.

The boys went to Pflugerville for a meet on Sep. 13. Herring was the top runner at 19:40, and freshman Brandon Patterson was second on the team finishing at 21:04. Senior Mitchell Rice was next at 22:15.

Brentwood hosted its first cross country invitational at North East Metropolitan Park on Sep. 1. The boys won first as a team with Herring winning the race and Patterson coming in second. The girls also won first as a team, sweeping the top five places. Haley Hutson and Miller tied for first, and the girls' top five all finished within two minutes of each other. Birt, Hope Hutson, and Lane finished third, fourth, and fifth.

In both the girls' and boys' divisions there were fewer than 15 runners. The other schools each had three runners and did not place high in the rankings.

For the first meet of the year on Aug. 29, Brentwood went to Belton to compete in the 1A-3A division of the Belton High School Cross Country Meet. Herring finished 25th in the race with a time of 18:56 in the 5K course, while Patterson was 45th with a time of 21:21. The boys finished sixth out of the 19 schools that competed.

The Lady Bears were also sixth and had four runners finish in the top 30. Birt finished ninth in the race with a time of 13:11; teammates Miller, Hope Hutson, and Lane finished within a minute of Birt.

Four flag football teams reach midway point, enduring rain-outs

By MJ Sung

Halfway through the flag football season, the middle school White team leads the way with a 3-1 record, while middle school Green is 2-1.

In elementary, the upper-level team is 1-3, while the lower-level team is 3-3. Among Brentwood's four football teams, several games have been rained out and rescheduled.

The middle school's White and Green teams are each composed of seventh- and eighth-grade players, and are coached by David Trevino, father of two BCS students.

The Green team won their first game 24-0 against St. Austin on Sep. 10. Eighth-grader Dillon Smith ran for two touchdowns and threw a short pass to eighth-grader Carey Sailors, who ran 30 yards for a touchdown. Seventh-grader Riley Walker intercepted a pass and ran it back for a touchdown.

A day earlier, the White team won their first

game 20-0 against Paragon. Seventh-grader Blaine Barker threw three touchdowns passes, two to seventh-grader Connor Troutman and a long one to seventh-grader Chase Blackman. Barker also threw a point-after pass to seventh-grader Graham Singleton.

The White team won 7-6 against St. Ignatius on Sep. 24. Barker threw one touchdown pass to Blackman and a point-after pass to Troutman. Troutman intercepted one pass, and both Blackman and seventh-grader Zach Mack intercepted two passes.

The Green team lost 18-13 loss against St. Francis on Sep. 24, but they won Sep. 27 at home. Earlier this week they had a game postponed when the referees did not report.

In the elementary, the upper-level team known as 3A is coached by Brian Jackson and Tim Meyers. The lower level or 1A is led by Trevino.

The 3A team won their first game 13-6 against

St. Gabriel on Sep. 10. Sixth-grader Luke Jackson intercepted a pass and ran 60 yards for a touchdown. He also caught a touchdown pass. Sixth-grader Isaac Copeland intercepted two passes that stopped St. Gabriel drives before they could score.

"This was our first game of the year and the boys played very hard," Meyer said. "Coach Jackson and I are very excited about this year's team and we are looking forward to a great season."

Since then they have lost three straight games, including two close ones.

The elementary 1A team started their season with a 25-0 loss against St. Andrews on Sep. 6, but they beat Paragon 6-0 on Sep. 9. Fifth-grader Zachary Billante ran for a touchdown at the end of the game.

They also won 12-6 against St. Gabriel on Sep. 24 as Billante ran for two touchdowns. Trevino said the boys continue to improve on

offense and defense, and they only gave up one big play.

Trevino said he expects the boys to try their best and push themselves to the "next level."

"Our goal must be to be our best in everything we do in every aspect of our life, giving all glory to God," Trevino said. "If we pursue that goal it will translate on the field to success."

Trevino has been playing flag football in the Austin area for 21 years and has played every position at one time or another. He is currently a quarterback/safety for one team and blocker/rusher for another. This is his third year coaching at BCS.

"I love this game, but more than the game, I love working with the kids," Trevino said. "When I see one of my players make a good play or I see that 'light' turn on and he gets what I am trying to say, it makes it all worthwhile."

Volleyball team soaring to the top

Varsity 4-0 in district, having swept all sets, as they take aim at state tournament

By Hannah Kwon

The Lady Bears volleyball team is 27-3 overall and 4-0 in district as they progress toward their goal of advancing to the state tournament. They have not yet lost a set in district play, having beaten Central Texas Christian, Round Rock Christian, TSD, and San Juan Diego.

Playoffs begin Oct. 24, and the state tournament begins two weeks after that.

Several factors contributed to starting the season with great expectations. Dusti Sheffield and Lauren Bohling are two strong additions to the coaching staff with their many years of coaching experience. Sophomore Blair Westerlund, a middle blocker, committed verbally to playing volleyball for the defending NCAA national champion UT Longhorns. In addition, middle blocker Kara Teal, also a sophomore, transferred from McNeil High School to lead the Lady Bears with Westerlund.

It looked like the pieces were in place for a big season, but when BCS defeated Hyde Park on Aug. 21 for what might have been the first time ever, it was clear that the team's ambition was not just words.

"Our biggest goal for the season is to not only make it to playoffs, but to make it to the state tournament in November," Sheffield said. "My expectation for the athletes is to grow closer to God through the avenue of volleyball."

After winning the Living Stones Tournament in Alvin Sep. 21 and starting district 4-0, the girls believe they can go far.

"We are winning state," Westerlund said.

Returning all-district players are senior Avery Westerlund and sophomores Blair Westerlund, Keely Hardin, and Brenna Decker. Other

varsity players include Teal, junior Katelyn Crawford, and freshmen Alicia Dixon, Nicole Dobos, and Addy Hardin.

There are three captains this season: Avery Westerlund is the "speaking" captain who acts as the spokesperson on the court during matches; Decker is the offensive captain who implements the attacks; and Keely Hardin is the defensive captain who makes decisions and adjustments for the defense.

"We know we can be really good this year," Avery Westerlund said in early September. "We're more determined to work hard and win so we can show everybody that we're a force to be reckoned with."

The season started with many pre-district wins against schools such as Lexington, St. Andrews, Trinity Christian, and Hyde Park. There were also two tournaments before the district games.



Elevation Sophomore Kara Teal, a transfer from McNeil High School, soars over the net in a match against St. Michaels. The Lady Bears are undefeated in district play.

photo: Mark Merkord

BCS was fifth and made it into the gold bracket in the Ft. Worth Christian Tournament on Aug. 23-24. They came in second at the BCS Invitational on Sep. 6-7.

Sheffield is the current varsity coach for the

Lady Bears. She has three years of coaching experience, coaching 13s and 14s in club. She recently instructed in Grace Academy in Georgetown and is an active member of Georgetown Church of Christ.

"This year, both JV and varsity coaches are very knowledgeable and much more excited for our season," Westerlund said.

Bohling, who has coached several years in clubs and middle schools, is the new JV coach.

"Things are coming along quite well for (the JV)," Bohling said. "We are continuing to work towards our fundamental skill development along with building the bond of trust within the team."

Both coaches said that the positive connection among the team members is one of the most important factors in continued success for the team as a whole.

"Every team has their own set of struggles and challenges," Sheffield said. "But I am continually amazed at how God is not only using me to impact young lives, but also how He's using them to impact me and each other!"

Vastly improved cheerleaders aim to lead

By Claire Nestor

The cheerleading program at Brentwood Christian is undergoing major changes, which include having a new coach, learning new skills, and setting new goals.

Varsity is now led by Ashley Dargai, a new high school English teacher. Dargai said she plans to have more pep rallies during the year and make cheer routines a regular thing during halftimes of basketball games.

Senior and varsity captain Erin Atchley said Dargai is always positive and very organized.

"She is Christ-centered, which is inspiring and encouraging to both the team and me personally," Atchley said.

Dargai said the varsity cheerleaders have

improved tremendously since before school started. They attended the Universal Cheerleaders Association cheer camp at UT during the summer.

"I think this summer we learned a lot and advanced in technique and confidence more than we ever have," Atchley said.

Dargai said she was worried before camp because she knew coaching was a big responsibility, and she never pictured herself as a coach. But once she got to know the girls, she couldn't have been more excited.

"They are the perfect group to start my cheerleading career with. They are dedicated and fun to be with at 6 a.m.," Dargai said.

Everyone involved with the cheerleading program agreed that they want the cheerleaders

to be more respected by the school. They said they want others to understand they work hard and want to help the student body have more school spirit.

Secondary principal Carol Johnson said she wants the cheerleaders to be "more visible." She also wants others to look up to the cheerleaders, for them to become leaders on campus, and to help get other students more involved and spirited.

"Positive leaders and role models – that's what I want," Johnson said.

In the future, Dargai said she plans to change the program even more. She wants to eventually compete and have male cheerleaders, and she hopes for a permanent mascot position.

Dargai said varsity is developing a good



photo: Ashley Dargai

Full of pep Varsity cheerleaders worked hard in the summer at UCA cheer camp.

foundation and is moving toward being more elite athletically.

"This has been the best year of my cheer career by far," junior Madalyn Garelick said. "I am surrounded by the most amazing group of girls and a loving coach."

Dr. Weed to spend year passing torch to Ashley

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“Teachers kind of get a double dose of principals this year,” Ashley joked.

Before working at Brentwood, Ashley in 1993 founded Pacific Horizons School, a private elementary through high school in American Samoa, and continued to lead the school for its first 18 years. Ashley said she founded the school mainly because her children had been attending the local schools, but she was not excited about them for many reasons.

“We asked ourselves, ‘Why not start something?’” Ashley said. “It just seemed right.”

Ashley said her role as director of Pacific Horizons gave her many helpful experiences to draw from coming into her position at BCS. She not only formed the school board, but also headed it. In addition to this, when a qualified teacher could not be found on the island, she did the teaching. Ashley said because of this, she’s taught many subjects at every level.

Another factor which has helped both Dr. Weed and Ashley is the similarities between Dr. Weed’s current position and Ashley’s previous position as director of Pacific Horizons. Ash-



Double vision Mara Ashley and Dr. Libby Weed are giving the elementary a double dose of love and leadership.

ley was the first director of Pacific Horizons, while Dr. Weed has been the only elementary principal at BCS besides Moss, who was not in the position long. Another significant similarity is that Ashley also hired her own replacement, and was there to advise her as well.

“She sort of carries all this information and knowledge of the job in her head, as I did,” Ashley said of Dr. Weed. “(I know) how important it is to carry that on to the next person, and appreciate the fact that there’s a lot I don’t know.”

Because her parents were missionaries as well, Ashley was born in Korea and lived there until she was 15.

However, Ashley said she always felt like Texas was her home. When her family moved back to Texas, they first settled in Abilene. Then they moved to Lubbock, where she finished high school. She earned a B.S. in education from Abilene Christian; later she earned an M.S. in educational change and innovation from Walden University.

Ashley said while the first few weeks of school were overwhelming, she is feeling more

comfortable now. She emphasized how impressed she was with BCS, most of all how the school’s mission is obviously central to both the teachers and students, and how evident it is that students enjoy being there.

“I’m stepping into big shoes by taking Dr. Weed’s place,” Ashley said. “I’m a little nervous, but I feel like this year of transition will help to make the jump a lot easier than it would have been coming in cold.”

While many agree that Ashley will be a wonderful elementary principal, they are still sad to see Dr. Weed go. Even Dr. Weed continues to express that she has mixed feelings about her retirement. However, she said she has many things in her future that she is looking forward to, particularly spending time with her husband and other members of her family.

“I love the school very much. It’s been a very significant part of my life for over 30 years,” Dr. Weed said. “I will certainly miss being principal at BCS. I’ve enjoyed it very much, and I still enjoy every day. But I feel like the time has come (to let a new person in) for the good of the school.”

Teachers have stories to share

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Dr. Paul Robison teaches English to freshmen and juniors. He came to Austin from Arkansas shortly before school started.

Dr. Robison got his B.A. in Bible and English from Harding. He later earned a D.Min. in church leadership from Bethel Seminary.

Through the years, he has preached, taught at York College, and spent 18 years as a missionary in Italy. He and his wife, who have four children, worked with small churches there.

The best part about working at BCS, Dr. Robison said, is the Christian atmosphere, and he likes the fact that the students are cooperative.

“Christians do good work,” he said.

In his free time he likes jogging and singing – especially barbershop.

Katie Smith, joining Paul Sladek as the new physical education teacher for the entire school, has a daunting task. In addition to coaching high school cross country and track, she must teach P.E. to a very wide range of students.

“It has been an adjustment for our family, but my kids have been really great during this transition, and that makes it easier,” she said.

Smith holds a bachelor’s degree in education from Harding. She previously taught first grade at BCS for six years and has coached multiple sports every year since 2000.

Dorothy Walters, the secondary computer science teacher and yearbook sponsor, comes with five years of teaching experience in north-

ern Virginia and Texas. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Abilene Christian.

Until recently, Walters’ husband was an Air Force pilot, and their family was stationed in Washington, D.C., for the last three years. Walters said she loved spending free time with her family in museums and viewing monuments.

When her family relocated to Central Texas, Walters heard about BCS from friends who had attended Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ. She said one of the best parts of working at BCS is having her three girls nearby: fifth-grader Carlie, third-grader Mollie, and preschooler Ellie.

While not quite a new teacher or a new face, new middle school English teacher Kay Taylor just moved buildings. She used to coordinate Safety Patrol and PSIA from her office in the B building, but now she has a whole room in the middle school hallway to do that.

Taylor said she is convinced “that the Lord was a big part of my return to the classroom.”

Renee Wright is the administrative assistant to secondary principal Carol Johnson. She has had 15 years of business management experience, and has worked at Brackenridge Hospital as well as Round Rock ISD.

Wright and her husband Ennis are the parents of three children, the oldest of whom studies intelligence for the U.S. Navy. When she has free time, Wright likes gardening, interior decorating, and teaching Bible classes.



photo: Deborah Strickland

Faithful and true Student Council members, led by president Jackson Hager (in hat), began the year by organizing the Back to School Bash on Sep. 7, attended by more than 100 students. The theme was “Americana: Going Back to School Like a Patriot!” In addition to activities like dodgeball and video games, party-goers enjoyed the movie “Remember the Titans.” The junior class had the best attendance, earning the right to select the homecoming theme.