



THE BEAR FACTS

VOL. XXIV NO. 1

BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2011



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IN SHORT

Eagle Scout

Eighth-grader Connor Crowe earned his Eagle Scout Award on Aug. 11. For his Eagle project, which he completed on May 30, Crowe and his team of volunteers worked to restore the Georgetown salamander habitat in the Twin Springs National Preserve. They returned the spring to its original path, replaced large stones, and made educational signs. Math teacher Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth served on Crowe's Eagle Board of Review.

7th grade retreat

Students boarding buses to go on the annual seventh-grade retreat Monday morning will head to a new spot – McKinney Roughs, southeast of Austin. The LCRA nature park features science-based education programs and extensive hiking trails. After years of using Camp Buckner near Marble Falls, secondary principal Jared Lee decided to try something different for the seventh grade.

Plaza drive completed

Work on the plaza drive extending from the Center for Science and the Arts toward the church courtyard was scheduled to be completed this week, meaning traffic patterns return to normal next week. Today all of the construction areas will be cleaned of dust and debris. School officials say the new plaza drive is intended to beautify the campus, and will eventually have benches and lamp posts.

StuCo events

This year's Student Council has been busy hosting social events such as the Back-to-School Bashes, Senior Sunrise, and Movie Night. StuCo will also help with the dedication of the Center for Science and the Arts on Oct. 1. Sponsor Linda Riedesel says they also might have a few secrets planned for the secondary students to enjoy.

BCS wins new playscape in nationwide drawing

megan **MONACELLI**
editor-in-chief

BCS won a playscape and \$5,000 from Old Navy and TerraCycle, a recycling company, in September after teacher Michelle Mohrmann filled out a survey last April. Ten representatives from area Old Navy stores attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the lower elementary playground on Tuesday afternoon, Sep. 27.

Students from kindergarten through second-grade will use the new equipment, which was made from recycled flip flops and milk cartons. The playscape will accompany the various play structures already on the playground, such as a merry-go-round, a boat, and a swing set.

More than 20 parents and volunteers helped set up and assemble the playscape last Friday and Saturday, Sep. 23-24. On Friday, the volunteers dug the footers for the playscape to go into the ground and built the retaining border. The next day they assembled the playscape, poured the concrete into the footers to secure and stabilize the new structure, and mulched the ground around it.

"Winning the playground and prize money from Old Navy was such a wonderful surprise," said Mohrmann, who spent many hours working with parents who pitched in to help. "We have the best volunteers around."

see **PLAYSCAPE**, page 8



photo: Michelle Mohrmann

Fun in the sun A team of volunteer parents put in hours of work last weekend installing the new playscape that Brentwood won in a nationwide drawing by Old Navy.

New building praised by students, teachers

kia **KHADEM**
reporter

Now that the BCS Center for Science and the Arts has been built, teaching and other daily activities for many Brentwood Christian teachers are much easier to perform, due to the greatly improved facilities.

The newly constructed building has garnered praise from the students and faculty in the first few weeks of the school year.

Special features include a separate chemistry lab, a separate practice room for choir and band, a brand new theater, ticket booths, and concession stands.

Brentwood's drama teachers have lauded the new theater. Middle school drama teacher Chloe Campbell said it will make theater productions less labor intensive and more polished, but students will need to take time to learn how to properly use the new stage equipment.

"Planning big rehearsals around sports in the FLC and building set pieces for the plays were big headaches," Campbell said.

The new science wing has received praise as well. Kristen Berry said it allows her chemistry students to work with hazardous chemicals in a proper laboratory environment during science experiments. The chemistry lab also has a storeroom to properly seal away dangerous

Middle school delights some, miffs others

dennis **CLIFFORD**
reporter

The merging of the sixth grade into middle school seems to have both pleased and confused the sixth graders, but it has also brought positive views from the faculty of building C.

"I like moving between classes, but sometimes it's confusing," sixth-grader Jackson Ryan said.

According to sixth-grade teachers, the class is thrilled to have lockers, but they are concerned about having time to use them and space to get to them.

Many seventh and eighth graders have expressed jealousy regarding the change.

"I think we've been cheated," seventh-grader Nicholas Pedroza said. "They get a lot of stuff we didn't get when we were in sixth grade."

The transition has affected more than just middle school students in BCS; it has also caused some inconvenience for high school students and the need to relocate classrooms for a few teachers.

Newcomers to building C in addition to sixth-grade students are Karen Peyton and Becky Stewart, who previously taught sixth grade with the other upper elementary classes in building B. Other teachers have also had to make room in their schedules for sixth-grade curriculum classes, and still others have had to move classrooms, including Michele Broadway, Efrain Contre-

see **MIDDLE**, page 4

chemicals.

"The extra room helps us during the labs in Physics," Berry said. "The new building makes science feel like an important part of the school."

Biology teacher Juliana Ewing agreed the new building provides a proper science lab for science experiments, something she had never enjoyed at any of the previous schools where she taught.

"The new building is wonderful," Ewing said. "I've been looking forward to a proper science lab for almost 20 years."

see **FINE ARTS**, page 4

Megan's Musings: Megan Monacelli

Mission work more loving than preaching

I stepped off the plane anxious to begin what I had traveled almost 24 hours to do. My Bible was easily accessible along with a spiral full of notes on faith, salvation, and redemption.

Despite my need for a hot meal and sleep, I was ready to work on the mission field in Zagreb, Croatia, even though I wasn't sure what my work would exactly entail. I had spent time in prayer, went to all the team meetings, and prepared answers and anecdotes for the Croatians' questions about my faith and about the Bible or God in general.

My preparations and expectations didn't quite hit the mark, however.

Boarding a plane with a Bible in hand, landing in a third-world country, and setting out with a team to bring the good news of Jesus to those who have never heard of Him before is a standard and long-held view of missions, and one that I held before I got a taste of a more meaningful mission field.

This summer I traveled to Croatia and Slovenia, two modern and religious countries, to partner with missionaries and spread the love of Christ, and in this experience my perspective on mission work drastically changed. Our team put on two children's camps that offered the bonus of allowing the kids to practice their English.

My role was not necessarily to tell them

about Jesus. In fact, most of the children we were working with knew about Him and knew many of the Old Testament stories. Instead, we simply loved on them. We laughed with them, sang silly songs with them, and played games with them all in the name of Christ.

*...we could be acting on
the mission field every time
we crawled out of bed.*

In light of the fact that many mission efforts we financially support and participate in with our churches are to places that have already heard the good news, maybe we should update our view of the mission field. Maybe our job isn't necessarily gearing up for theological debates and memorizing verses.

How then do we carry out the charge Jesus gave his disciples to "witness in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the Earth"?

While there is a place for vast amounts of biblical knowledge on the field, the best preparation is a right relationship with God and

an expectation to simply love others. We can actively be on the mission field by carrying out His love and spreading it to others through both our words and actions.

By letting our faith and Biblical knowledge take root in our actions, we would not only speak the gospel, but also live and love it out. If being a missionary is in large part about loving others, then our view would actually spread the boundaries of the mission field across oceans and maybe right up to our door step.

What if we could experience and participate in the mission field on a daily basis? If we, in striving to be more like Christ, let God into every aspect of our lives and moved Him to the center of our lives, then we could be acting on the mission field every time we crawled out of bed.

We could become missionaries to our peers, teachers, and parents. We could be missionaries at the dinner table, in the locker room, and even on the stage simply by loving others and encouraging them – simply by serving them like Jesus served others, and simply by being Christ to everyone around us.

Saint Francis of Assisi, about 800 years ago, said it best: "Preach the gospel at all times, and when necessary use words."

Hannah's Kwon-daries: Hannah Kwon

Driving not meant for multitasking

Is teenage driving that dangerous? I mean, you push the gas pedal, watch out for other cars, and stop when you need to. Everything sounds so simple. And not to state the obvious, but it is far more comfortable to drive with air conditioning than to walk under the blazing Texas sun.

On the other hand, in a recent survey of 25 BCS students who drive or have a permit, 15 of them admitted they text or talk on the phone while driving. This is 60 percent of the students who participated in the survey. We can't deny that we are in a dangerous place here.

Some BCS students express concern about teens who get distracted while driving.

"Doing other activities while driving should be treated more seriously," junior Steven Bailey said. "Anything that lets you take your eyes off the road is a hazard not only to you but to other people."

"My life is more important than putting on mascara or lip gloss," junior Amanda Conway said.

According to the National Safety Council, more than 5,000 young drivers aged 15-20 are killed every year in traffic crashes, and more than 10 percent of this number were distracted drivers. Not surprisingly, the basic car insurance rate for teenagers is nearly twice as much as it is for their parents.

Humans aren't born to multitask. It just makes sense for a person to concentrate on one thing at one time, especially if that one thing weighs 3,500 pounds and is traveling 60 miles an hour. Whatever you do in the car while you are driving – whether it is texting, talking on the phone, looking at a mirror, or reading a magazine – it can never be justified; it is simply not safe.

"I understand the risk of doing something else while driving, but I still do it anyways," junior Masha Heins said. "Kids know that it isn't safe, but we just don't think about it when we start driving."

Let us not walk through the foggy future anymore. It is time for some standards to be established so we can each lower our risk of being in an accident closer to 0 percent. It is important for teenagers to drive. However, it is also very important to know how dangerous driving can be. Start by acknowledging the fact that driving is definitely different from other new toys in your life, for on the road, you are the very one holding the responsibility for your life and death. Simply being well-informed and cautious isn't enough. For the sake of our lives and others around us, we should all promise ourselves to focus only on the road while driving.

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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photos: Elena Battle

Lucky guy Seventh-grader Keaton Drenner enjoys the company of several eighth-grade girls at the middle school's Back-to-School Bash on Sep. 2. Students ate pizza, played interactive video games, and watched the movie "Tangled."

Magazine sales exceed last year's totals

Brentwood Christian's annual magazine sale brought in \$27,600 this year, which is about \$4,000 more than was raised last year.

The top-selling student during the sale, which ran from Sep. 16-26, was junior Danielle Riedesel. Rounding out the top 10 sellers were sixth-grader Paris Bowman, seventh-grader Nicholas Dunagan, senior Kayle Morin, freshman Tyler Clark, eighth-grader Rebekah Legband, eighth-grader Andre Kuhn, sixth-grader Kira Juranek, sixth-grader Lauren Weilemann,

and seventh-grader Gabbie Nguyen.

Prizes for the top sellers included an LCD TV, Blu-ray DVD player, and \$100 cash. There will also be a drawing for a Nintendo Wii.

Sixth-grade teacher Michelle Mohrmann's class sold the most magazines, winning bags of candy to pass out to all her students.

Each day at 3:05 p.m. all secondary students gathered in the athletic center for a chance to win money. Morin, for example, won \$480 on the "weepul game."

Answering challenge, BCS students serve others, remember 9/11

jin ha **JEONG**
reporter

The nightmare of terror known as "9/11" is 10 years behind us. With the victims who suffered in the terrorist attacks slowly fading from our memory, what can we do to honor them?

BCS students were encouraged during all-school chapel on Sep. 8 to join a service project and to show Christian effort for neighbors who need help. Development director Brandon Tatum, the speaker that day, challenged students of all ages to be of service to the community, as a tribute to those who lost their lives serving

others on Sep. 11, 2001.

"We try to be the hands and feet of the Lord," Tatum said. "I want all kids at school to serve their neighbors."

In the following days, many BCS Bible classes did special things to help their neighbors. The fifth-grade classes collected and contributed hundreds of water bottles for the Bastrop fire victims. Third graders made thank-you cards for local firefighters and police officers.

Jessica Love's sophomore girls wrote letters for victimized girls who were rescued from sex trafficking, and they brought donations for fire victims. They also collected money and socks

for an orphanage in Peru with Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth's junior Bible class.

"I thought it was a great idea to reach out to people and help them," sophomore Avery West-erlund said. "We're so blessed, so it's important to help people who aren't as lucky as us."

Love showed her passion for the service project and her gratitude for her students.

"I'm so proud of my class," Love said, "that my students openly and enthusiastically help other people in trouble."

Middle school Bible classes joined the project too. They cleaned up the cafeteria for the lunch ladies, helped in the auditorium, and

gathered food and water for the homeless. Dr. Hollingsworth's seventh-grade boys and girls cleaned up the gym after the volleyball games.

"It is good for seventh graders to learn how to help others," Dr. Hollingsworth said.

Brentwood administrators were inspired by an email from Harding University, sent at the end of August, challenging the school to participate in a nationwide service effort. Working in partnership with The Corporation for National and Community Service, Harding was assisting in documenting one million hours of service across the nation by Sep. 13.

Record heat rocks Texas, roasts Brentwood

charlie **SINCLAIR**
reporter

It was America's hottest summer ever. And it ended with the worst fires Central Texas has ever seen.

Austin shattered the previous record for 100-degree days with 87 (through Monday), and it tied the record for the hottest recorded temperature ever in Austin at a scorching 112 degrees on Aug. 28.

"This heat makes me feel like melting cheese," freshman Duc Minh Phan said in early September.

According to P.E. coach David Peyton the

heat did not have an effect on elementary P.E., because they do not go outside. But the heat forced high school P.E. to limit their time outside for a few days in late August and made traveling to P.E. almost unbearable for some students.

The high school boys basketball team has outside workouts, so head coach Brandon Tatum instructs his players to drink at least a gallon of water every day. Cross country runners have been instructed to drink a lot of water before and after workouts.

Texas had the hottest average temperature from June to August in recorded U.S. history. To make things worse, Central Texas has been in the

worst stage of drought since June. Lakes Travis and Buchanan are dangerously low, which has forced limits on residential water use.

The last real substantial rain Austin had was in May, and this has caused everything to dry up and the trees and grass look as if someone had wrung them out like a sponge.

These conditions, combined with high winds and some stray sparks, caused several fires on Sep. 4, during Labor Day weekend. The one in Bastrop burned 1,386 houses, along with 95 percent of Bastrop State Park. Many BCS families have been giving money and supplies to help all those families who lost their homes.

Secondary chapel gets makeover

joseph **KANG**
reporter

The secondary chapel service has settled into a new place. With frequent audio-visual aids in the theater of the Center for Science and the Arts, the chapel format has also changed in various ways.

Brentwood Oaks youth minister Adam Herndon said secondary chapel was moved to the Center for Science and the Arts this year to form a friendly environment for teenagers by making it less formal.

"New chapel brings me closer to God and helps me to understand Him more," senior Tony Dang said.

According to Herndon, the changes to the chapel format were the result of conversations among development director Brandon Tatum, secondary principal Jared Lee, president Marquita Moss, and himself in the summer.

Herndon said he prepares contemporary Christian music to play before chapel starts, making a social environment for students. This year there have also been more frequent videos to help the understanding of serious topics.

According to Tatum, announcements and recognitions will no longer be made at the end of chapel, but instead will be presented with PowerPoint before chapel begins. This will allow the time to be dedicated to worshipping God more.

"I hope it is a special time in the week for the students, and a time where they can be renewed," Tatum said.

However, some students seem unfamiliar with the new chapel format. Senior Sydney Jung said it was hard to read all of the announcements. Others said they prefer not to stand up while they are singing.

Herndon said he will invite various speakers this year. Though most of last year's speakers were BCS teachers and ministers, Herndon plans to invite more area youth ministers.

Herndon, who will lead most of the singing this year, said he is looking for more feedback.

The elementary chapels and all-school chapel will remain in the auditorium.

NJHS inducts 28 members

lanae **HOLLINGSWORTH**
reporter

Brentwood Christian inducted 28 eighth graders into the National Junior Honor Society on Wednesday, Sep. 28, in the theater.

The ceremony took place during first period, and all middle school was in attendance, along with many parents. Afterward the inductees and their parents enjoyed a breakfast buffet at Cool River Cafe.

At Cool River, the new members listened to encouraging words from parent Les McDaniel. In addition NHS president Bryan Williams gave a brief speech on the activities of NJHS. Other NHS officers also attended and helped with the various activities.

Inductees were notified of their acceptance into the society last week, and they had their first meeting the next day, when they elected officers.

In the past, NJHS has included eighth and ninth graders. But with the introduction of the sixth graders into middle school, sponsors Kaleen Graessle and Brooke Hollingsworth recommended using the sixth- and ninth-grade years as "proving grounds" for NJHS and NHS, respectively.

Next year, NJHS will be able to induct both seventh- and eighth-grade students.

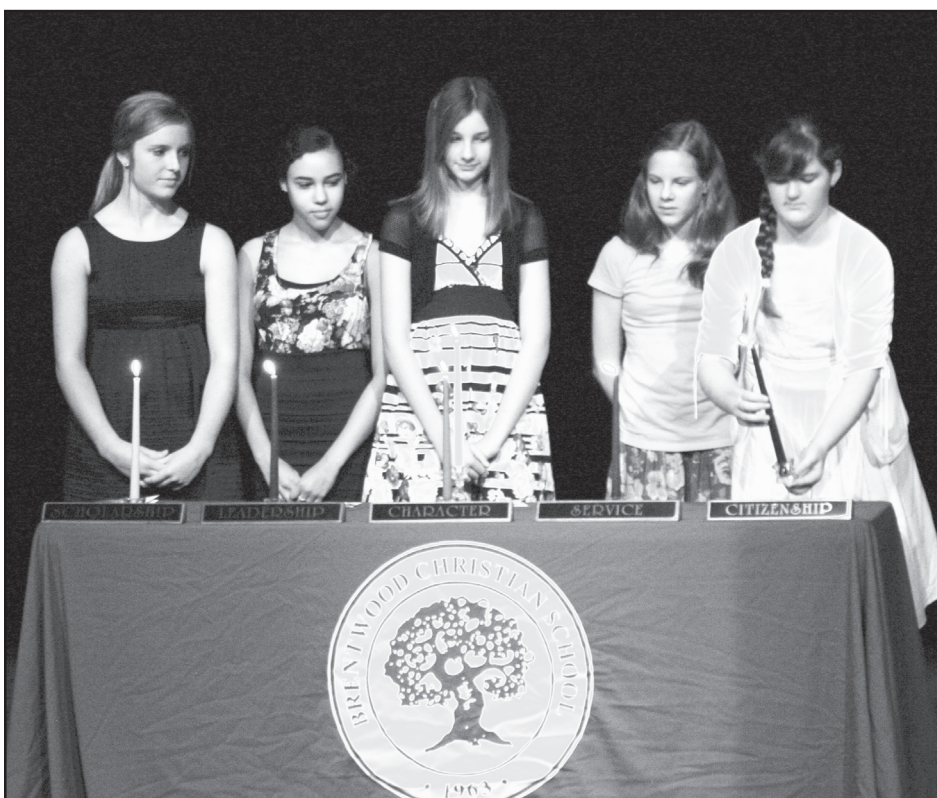


photo: Mary Monacelli

This candle represents... Eighth graders and newly elected NJHS officers take part in Wednesday morning's induction ceremony in the new theater. From left, they are Keely Hardin (president), Elise Lilya (vice president), Chandler Alberda (secretary), Martha Hughes (treasurer), and Bella Spills (historian). Afterwards, the new members and their parents enjoyed a breakfast buffet at Cool River Cafe.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Bailey Hardin

Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2012.

Leading lady smacks softballs, bakes amazing cakes

Jackson HAGER
reporter

Whether it's in the halls or on the softball field, many students smile when they hear the bubbly twang of Bailey Hardin. The merry senior has been going to Brentwood Christian since the first grade, eventually becoming involved in student government and athletics, particularly softball.

Bailey has been a leader since she started high school, being in Student Council all four years. She distinctly remembers her freshman StuCo retreat. Describing the lake house getaway as "interesting," she remembers hunkering down and growing closer to the group, despite the baking heat and creeping bugs. Though no longer in ninth grade, she remains the "eternal freshman" of the group, and has always been given the dirty work. But she has taken it with a smile and put all that she had into it.

"She is always willing to get dirty," says StuCo sponsor Linda Riedesel, who was especially impressed when Bailey was put in charge of the talent show her sophomore year.

Bailey has risen through the ranks of StuCo to become president this year. She has made moves to bridge the gap between middle school and high school, hosting and planning events for both groups.

Friends describe Bailey as a charming, enthusiastic, down-to-earth girl. They reminisce about memories such as the Odyssey project, when Bailey and Laura Combs played all the characters from the Greek epic. While many of their classmates found it silly, this was a turning point in their friendship. Soon, they began to hang out more and more often, becoming

very close.

"We're together 24/7," Laura says. "She is my other half."

Throughout her years of high school, Bailey has made friends from across the grades, making sure that everyone she meets is included and having a great time.

Bailey's leadership is apparent not only around school, but on the field. She has played center-field in softball since her freshman year. Her teammates say she is a loud, encouraging player. Softball coach Paul Sladek says he is

especially impressed with how much Bailey has grown as a player and leader on the field. Bailey has worked endlessly to improve her game, and has worked with her other teammates to improve their skills as well. Her junior year, she was named both first team all-state and first team all-district.

"All the things you would want from a player, she's got it," Sladek says.

Bailey's faith is well known among her friends, and her sisters Keely (8th) and Addy (7th) say they consider her a role model. Due to the dearth of male leaders, Bailey has taken the mantle of leadership in her youth group at Round Rock Church of Christ. Bailey says her main spiritual influence is from her mom and aunt, and from her recent Bible class teachers, Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth and Michele Broadway. Bailey says they have taught her to persevere and hold her head high.

A defining obsession of Bailey's that people knew her for is her love of the art of baking. Finding that it relieves stress, she spends much of her free time perfecting her culinary skills, much to the delight of her classmates.

"They don't compare to anything," friend Katie Clement says of her cakes. "She is on a different level of baking."

Bailey was taught to bake by her late grandmother. During her freshman year, her grandmother got sick, but Bailey continued to come and bake with her. With these fond memories, she plans one day to continue her passion and own her own bakery.

To reach this goal, Bailey plans to major in business and minor in food science and technology at Texas A&M University.

"Eventually I would like to own a bakery, but until then God is going to show me what to do," Bailey says.



Offseason

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and faster during the offseason. They run and scrimmage during every P.E. class, and they lift weights afterwards.

Efrain Contreras is training the track team during offseason. They usually run three or four miles and lift weights.

"I want to do better than last year," said junior Matthew Onabajo, who runs the 400 meters. "I hope I can go to state this year."

Softball coach Paul Sladek is training his players on the baseball field. Sladek said his most important goals are increasing running speed and finding a pitcher.

Fine arts, science teachers on cloud nine in new building

continued from page 1

Choir teacher Missy Weaver said the facilities have been a great improvement over her previous room. She said there are less scheduling conflicts, better acoustics, and improved lighting and sound equipment.

"The administration should be proud of the leadership it took to make this building," Weaver said. "The new facility won't change the students, but they'll take more pride in themselves."

Band teacher Travis Pollard said the new band hall allows more space for the growing band program and a safer environment to work in. The students also have new practice rooms to play their instruments in solitude, or with a group, without distractions.

"The new building changes every aspect of the band program," Pollard said. "We have the tools, resources, and talent to take it to the next level."

Some fine arts students say that the new

building allows them new opportunities to learn more about their subjects.

"I don't think we could go back to the old choir room," senior Kayle Morin said. "It's been needed and it was an easy transition for us. Going back wouldn't be the same."

Initially the bells in the new building did not ring, causing students to arrive to their next classes late. But since Sep. 9, this issue has been resolved.

Students have complained that the stools in Ewing's classroom are uncomfortably high, causing strain on the back. Ewing said the school is ordering new chairs to replace the current ones.

Although there have been a few minor problems, the consensus among students and faculty alike has been extremely positive.

"It's a terrific building; the acoustic center is marvelous, and it works superbly," teacher Craig Moore said. "Artistically, it balances out the decor of the whole campus, while giving the south side of the campus a greater presence."

Middle school reaction mixed

continued from page 1

ras, Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth, Cissy Johnson, Cindy Nestor, and Mel Witcher.

"Anytime you make a change there are always difficulties," BCS secondary principal Jared Lee said. "However, I see it as an easier transition into the future. I do appreciate the attitude of the teachers in moving the classrooms as well as the teachers who have moved to the new building."

To ease the process, teachers had some assistance from parents and students in moving classrooms over the summer. The relocating of the classrooms and schedule changes were challenging to organize, according to Lee, but there are plans in motion that will see to middle school having all of their classes in the lower section of building C eventually.

"I think it was a great move," Broadway said. "I know there are a lot of happy kids."

However, many high school students are vocal against the change, due mostly to the

fact that the junior and senior classes have had to move to smaller lockers. The middle school uses the larger downstairs lockers which were used by juniors and seniors in years past. New lockers were purchased to accommodate the sixth graders, meaning all the middle school students have larger lockers than the upperclassmen have.

"I think it's good for the sixth graders," said senior Karlie Mattison, "but it's a little inconvenient for us."

Another complaint from high school students is that the crowded stairways and noisy hallways have made it difficult for older students to move between classes. With the addition of building F, more students have been using the downstairs hallways, causing traffic jams and making it more difficult for all secondary students to get to class on time.

"The sixth graders were perfectly fine in elementary school," junior Brooklyn Merford said.

Dynamic duo rows 100 miles down Colorado River

carter **BOYD**
reporter

You probably know them from chapel: the dynamic duo who share their experiences with the school. You might have heard their story or seen their video from the night they spent on the streets last year.

However, you probably haven't heard of the latest challenge that basketball coach Brandon Tatum and BOCC youth minister Adam Herndon took on – a grand challenge of endurance and strength to rule them all.

At 7 a.m. on Saturday, Sep. 3, Herndon and Tatum boarded a tiny two-person kayak to set off on the CR100, a grueling 100-mile canoe race down the Colorado River. The race began in Bastrop and ended down river in the town of Columbus no later than the 32-hour time limit allowed. More than 200 boats were entered, many of which were captained by experienced or professional rowers.

Neither Tatum nor Herndon had ever competed in a boat race before, and neither had any real experience kayaking, save a single trip down the last 40 miles of the same stretch of river. Despite being brand new to the field, they finished the race in 24 hours and 50 minutes, placing 20th in their category, "Tandem Adventure," and 110th overall. Of the many boats

that participated, 87 did not finish the race.

The race also served as a great bonding experience for the two, putting them through tough times and forcing them to make memories.

"Tatum and I were a good duo," Herndon said. "It would've been miserable with anyone else. And we couldn't have done it without our

support crew, Misty (Herndon's wife) and Megan (Tatum's wife). They fed us and filled our CamelBaks with water at every checkpoint."

"I knew I couldn't quit in front of my wife," Tatum said when asked what kept him going through the grueling 100 miles. "Quitting wasn't an option."

Although they persevered and did well, both Tatum and Herndon admitted it wasn't an easy experience. Herndon described it as "one of the longest nights of my life," and called it a "wonderful and awful experience."

After the race, Tatum found everyday activities that he had previously taken for granted harder than he would have thought.

"I couldn't squeeze my toothpaste tube or button my shirt for a couple weeks," Tatum said. "I will never do it again."

The night was not passed in style, either. Tatum described the boat they rented as "a really bad kayak," and said that everyone else's was long and skinny, while theirs was short and fat.

"We had people come up to us and ask us if we were actually going to do this race in that kayak," Tatum recalled.

Through the long hard night, Herndon and Tatum shared many interesting experiences. Once in the middle of the night, a water snake with "a head the size of a softball" accompanied the two. In the hours before sunrise, Tatum was so tired that he hallucinated a deer standing on the shore.

"He kept yelling, 'Look, it's drinking water on the riverbank!'" Herndon recalled. "It wasn't. There was no deer."



photo: Megan Tatum

Row, row, row... Coach Brandon Tatum and youth minister Adam Herndon make their way down the Colorado River during a 100-mile canoe race on Sep. 3. They met their goal of completing the race, although it took them nearly 25 hours, and Herndon called it a "wonderful and awful experience."

New guidance counselor brings colleges to BCS

e.j. **SUNG**
reporter

Brentwood Christian's new guidance counselor, Dr. D'Lanna Mason, is eager to help BCS students investigate a variety of colleges. So she has scheduled 27 colleges from California to Connecticut to bring representatives and introduce their schools to students. She scheduled 13 in September alone. In contrast, counselors from 10 colleges met BCS students last year.

Dr. Mason said she wants to introduce a variety of universities so that the students can have opportunities to learn about different types of schools, including public and private, Christian and secular, large and small.

During the college meetings, admissions counselors talk about what degree programs the school offers, athletics, student groups, the admissions process, scholarships, and financial aid. Some of the colleges offer food for breakfast or lunch to attract more students. Dr. Mason said the meeting is a great opportunity for students to get their questions answered in person.

"If students are just beginning the college exploration process, they should attend as many



Dr. D'Lanna Mason

information sessions as possible," Dr. Mason said.

Senior Marcus McCormick said the college meetings were very helpful for him.

"The meetings were very important to me because I learned what programs each college has," McCormick said.

Dr. Mason said that since she is new to Texas, she does not yet have any strong relationships with the universities in Texas.

"As soon as school began, I started to reach out to admissions counselors and invite them to come and talk to students at Brentwood," Dr. Mason said.

She said that the admissions counselors are the greatest resources that students can have in applying to colleges.

"So, take advantage!" She encouraged.

Before her family moved to Austin last October, Dr. Mason lived in Nashville for 12 years. She has a B.S. from Old Dominion University in Virginia, an M.S. from Tennessee Tech Uni-

versity, and an Ed.D. (Doctor of Education) from Vanderbilt University.

Dr. Mason worked for Vanderbilt for seven years before moving to Austin. Initially, she worked in the Career Center there, helping college students explore career opportunities and apply for jobs and internships. Then for three years, she taught career development classes there, which helped students find good fits for internships and jobs.

The Masons came to Texas when Dr. Mason's husband, John, was offered a new job. Dr. Mason said she wanted to work as a guidance counselor in a small school where she could get to know the students. After interviewing with secondary principal Jared Lee, she said they shared similar visions and would work well together.

The Masons have two daughters: Sarah, who is a senior in Westlake High School, and Hannah, who is an eighth grader in Westridge Middle School. Her family is actively involved in mission work in Honduras and founded a non-profit organization, the Path of Hope Foundation, which provides educational scholarships to girls in Honduras.

TAKE YOUR PICK

New guidance counselor Dr. D'Lanna Mason is providing seniors opportunities to learn about a variety of colleges. In September alone, representatives from the following universities visited with students.



Eighth-grade volleyball undefeated

Ianae **HOLLINGSWORTH**
reporter

The Lady Bears junior high 5A volleyball team has been demolishing opponents, having won all but one match in two sets. Their record stands at 5-0.

The team, made up entirely of eighth graders, is led by Keely Hardin and Blair Westerlund, both of whom participated in the Junior Olympics in Atlanta this summer with their club team, Austin Juniors. Four other girls also play on Club Jollyville together, meaning six of eight girls play on club teams.

"The result of playing so much volleyball year round is that this team is the most talented group of eighth-grade volleyball players we have had since I've been coaching here," coach Kaylee Loftis said.

All of the 5A girls played together in the Hutto summer league. According to Hardin, they mostly dominated but occasionally lost their focus and lost by a small margin.

Loftis said that the team can still get better and that their goal is to win the AIPL tournament during the first week of November.

The 3A team is coached by Megan Hines (BCS '05), and they lost their first match against St. Stephens on Monday, Sep. 12. The team has 12 girls, with both seventh and eighth graders. The 2A team is mostly seventh graders and is also coached by Loftis.

BCS hires college coach as boys' AD; Loftis new girls' AD

matthew **ARCHER**
reporter

Brentwood Christian has added a new administrator to its staff by hiring Brian Thrift, who will serve as athletic director for the boys. Last year's interim athletic director Devan Loftis has taken the position of girls' athletic director.

This comes after the administration decided during the summer to help strengthen the athletic program. According to director of development Brandon Tatum, one of the ideas was to hire a second athletic director. When this was brought before the school board in July, the board decided it would be feasible to hire another director, and they began the search. Tatum said they looked at many resumes and reached out to a few people, including Thrift, whom Tatum had known since they were both assistant basketball coaches at Abilene Christian University.

Thrift is a former basketball coach at Olivet Nazarene University, ACU, and Rochester College. He also was an assistant athletic director at Rochester, which is in Michigan, and was in charge of monitoring athletes' academic progress, as well as facilities and sports marketing.

"He brings a lot of experience from other stuff he's been doing," Loftis said. "He gives us the ability to do a lot of new things for the athletic program."

Loftis said with the addition of a second athletic director there is more time to focus on improving performances in each specific sport

and to make aesthetic improvements, rather than having to focus mostly on budgeting and scheduling games.

Some improvements are already evident, such as the new scoreboards in the FLC and bleachers for the soccer field. Another upcoming facility upgrade will be new lights in the FLC and partial lighting added on the soccer field, enabling them to do some nighttime practices.

Thrift said he came to Brentwood for a "kingdom impact on the lives of young children" and to be away from the rigorous recruiting trail that took him away from his family so much at Rochester. Ironically though, he has been away from them for the beginning of the school year, since they stayed in Michigan when he came to Austin in August.

According to Thrift, he was not looking for a new job when Tatum called him but was intrigued by the offer and decided it would be a good fit for him.

Thrift and his wife Alyson have two boys: a kindergartner named Brooks and an eight-week-old named Brock. They joined him on Sep. 24.



Coach Brian Thrift

Offseason work heats up

m. j. **SUNG**
reporter

The Brentwood Christian athletic teams started their offseason workouts in August. Baseball, basketball, soccer, softball, and track teams are hoping to make playoffs.

For the boys' soccer and baseball teams, there is a new coach, Brian Thrift, who is also the new boys' athletic director. Since he is new, Thrift wants to get to know the players. But he already has some goals in place.

"I want my players to come out to work and show respect to all opponents," Thrift said.

Both soccer teams – boys and girls – are learning ball skills with coach Thrift and assistant Cash Miller, who coached elementary and middle school last year. The players are expecting to learn more how to improve their skills from the two coaches. Having goals helps them endure the hot sun on the field.

Boys' basketball coach Brandon Tatum said his main goal right now is for the team to get in shape, but ultimately he wants his team to be the best defense in district.

"Our strength is that we have a fit team," junior Dennis Clifford said. "Last year we had more energy left than the other teams in the fourth quarter."

Girls' basketball coach Devan Loftis is focusing on increasing speed in workouts. Loftis said he expects his players to get stronger

see **OFFSEASON**, page 4

McCormick, Brunson lead runners to state

jonathon **REICH**
reporter

Senior Marcus McCormick is now the fastest cross country runner in BCS history.

Finishing a recent meet with a time of 17:31, McCormick took four seconds off the previous school record held by 2009 graduate Mark Nesslage.

However, McCormick knows it will matter more if he does it at the state meet, since some other courses do not meet the regulation distance of five kilometers. Nesslage was timed at 18:04 in the 2007 state meet.

"Continuing to run at that level is going to require a lot of training, encouragement from my teammates, and help from God," McCormick said.

The state meet will be Oct. 22 in Waco.

McCormick's feat occurred in Brentwood's second cross country meet of the season, on Sep. 16 in Pflugerville. The boys and girls teams earned third and fourth place, respectively, among 3A schools.

This meet was an improvement from the first one of the season, when the girls placed eighth and the boys finished ninth.

There were also many runners who placed in this meet, unlike the first one. McCormick earned fifth place, and junior Matthew Archer was the seventh to finish, coming in at 17:54.

The girls' race had similar results. Senior Britany Brunson was the head of the group again, finishing in third place at 13:10 on the two-mile course, while junior Priscilla Glenn managed to get 15th, exactly 1:20 behind Brunson.

Before this, the teams started off their season in a difficult meet on Saturday, Sep. 3, in Belton.

In spite of difficult competition, Brunson pulled through in sixth place with a time of 13:06, only about 30 seconds behind the top runner. After Brunson, the rest of the girls' team managed to stay within two minutes of each other.

The boys' experience was similar. McCormick led the boys at 18:30; after him the rest of the team managed to stay relatively close together, staying about only five minutes apart.

"I was very impressed," coach Jacob Rotich said. "Of all the years I've been coaching I've never had a team with times that close to each other. The team doesn't usually do that well at the beginning of the season."

The third meet of the season was in Cedar Park on Sep. 24. McCormick (18:23) and Archer were the top finishers for the boys, while Brunson (12:32) and Glenn again led the girls.

Rotich said he is hoping the boys will make the top five in the state this year. After the second meet, he said he believes this is very achievable – all they would need to do is get at least two runners in the top 10.

Girls' coach Katie Smith said she would like the girls to get at least third in state, which she said she believes is an achievable goal because of the girls' determination and focus, but one that won't be easy considering that the team lost two of their top five runners this year.

To achieve their goals, the teams are outside running every day, doing different activities to build endurance and speed. Rotich and Smith both have different schedules for their teams, which include running the trails behind the school, and running around the soccer field and roads during eighth period.

"This year is just much more organized and better training for actual meets," junior Travis Clark said.

The next meet will be this Saturday, Oct. 1, in Round Rock.

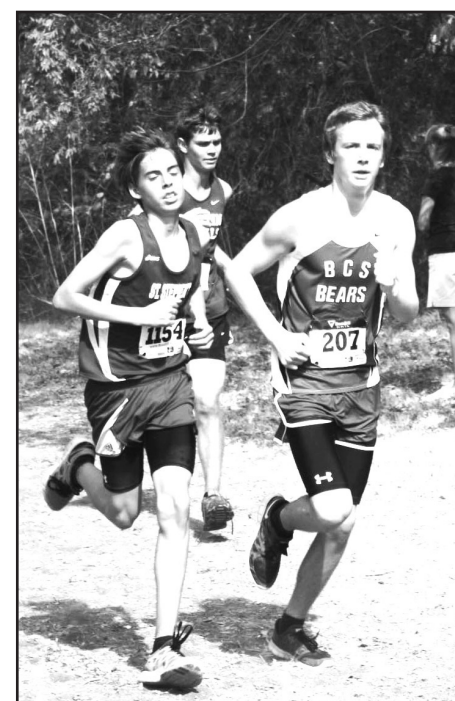


photo: Melissa Vandegriff

Cruising Junior Matthew Archer presses toward the finish during the cross country meet at Pflugerville High on Sep. 16.

Varsity volleyball back on track in district



photo: Mark Merkord

Get up! Sophomore Avery Westerlund spikes the ball in the Lady Bears' game against Hyde Park on Aug. 23.

lanae **HOLLINGSWORTH**
reporter

The Lady Bears are 3-2 in district going into last night's game. Led by new coach Britt James-Sauceda, they are currently third in district standings and on course to make the playoffs.

The team played several matches before getting a boost by adding two players to their roster. Since then the team has played in two tournaments and several non-district matches before starting district play on Sep. 6 with a win at Central Texas Christian in five sets. Five out of seven attackers hit in the positive percentile, and senior Brittany Brunson led the team with an average of 2.8 assists per set.

The Lady Bears had their ups and downs at the Brentwood Invitational on Sep. 9-10. They struggled with their serving but played as a team in their fifth match, communicating and passing at will.

On Sep. 12, the team lost their second district match in three sets at St. Dominic against a taller team of club players who could hit the ball down. A week later, although two of the sets were close, the girls lost to Round Rock Christian on Sep. 19, in three sets.

The girls beat Waco Texas Christian in three sets to win their second district game on Sep. 22.

The team has undergone some changes

stemming from the hiring of James-Sauceda in early August. She has sped up the offense by running quick middles and changing the setting position, making it harder for the opponent to defend.

James-Sauceda has not only worked to increase the volleyball prowess of the athletes, but also deepen their faith in God.

"Spiritually I've attempted to deepen the team's roots in scripture and prayer by implementing team chaplains and small groups," James-Sauceda said.

Captains for the varsity are Brunson and Megan Gum. Katie Clement is the team's chaplain, while Mackenzie Merkord is the JV chaplain.

James-Sauceda said that she hopes to take "strides" towards forming a strong volleyball program at BCS. The team set district goals which include qualifying for playoffs, beating Round Rock Christian, and placing first in district. While first place is no longer attainable, the team hopes to make playoffs and beat RRCA the second time around.

"It was a rough start, but we are getting to where we want to be," junior Morgan Vandygriff said.

James-Sauceda played volleyball at Laredo Community College and Colorado Christian University. She began coaching club volleyball in 2004. Last year she assisted with the BCS varsity.

Cheerleading has new coach, enters new era

madalyn **GARELICK**
reporter

The cheer program at Brentwood Christian is getting a fresh start, beginning with a new coach. Ange Blankenship is now sharing her role as varsity cheer coach with Vanessa Hart, a 2010 ACU graduate.

Hart was a varsity cheerleader for three years at Anderson High School. She has also done gymnastics since age four and competitive cheer squad with Cheer West starting in sixth grade. Hart was the cheer captain at Murchison Middle School.

With her long history and knowledge of cheerleading, Hart is bringing a fresh new look for the Brentwood cheer squad. One goal she set for herself was to be a coach that could provide an ample amount of time to the squad while balancing three other jobs.

Hart also has one main goal for the squad.

"I want them to be more confident in themselves," she said, explaining that this would improve their skills.

Hart has also set some new procedures. The members of the cheer squad now have to complete 20 merits by homecoming in January. The girls can complete those by attending volleyball games, doing community service, getting good grades, and taking cheer classes outside of school.

Another change this year is the addition of morning practices. On Tuesdays at 7 a.m. the team is in the gym learning cheers and practicing new skills. On Wednesdays the girls are in the gym at 6:30 a.m. conditioning with crunches, lifting weights, and stretching.

"I want the squad to be viewed as athletics and a team sport," Hart said.

Hart has said that not only does she want the girls to play a role in supporting the athletics but also to attend other school events. This means attending plays, musicals, StuCo events, and other Brentwood activities.

A new addition for all high school students is the opportunity to become a part of the Claw Crew. This will be a student-led group that will support the various teams. This group was formed to make games more fun and spirited. Students will have the chance to show their crazy side while supporting the Bears.

"The more school spirit the fans have, the better athletics will be," Hart said

The 2011-12 varsity cheer squad is seniors Shannon Lesko (captain), Katie Clement, and Karlie Mattison; sophomore Erin Atchley; and freshmen Katelyn Crawford, Madalyn Garelick, and Rachel Dixon.

The cheer squad held another tryout this week in an effort to add more girls.

Bears' football team cruises to easy victories

lanae **HOLLINGSWORTH**
reporter

What two words are associated with the coming of September and October? Fall and football. The junior high flag football team started the season 2-0, with victories over Redeemer and St. Ignatius. A third game was suspended due to lightning on Tuesday night.

The team started the season off with a 35-7 win Sep. 15 against Redeemer at St. Louis Catholic Church. They got a safety on the first play after the kickoff. Eighth-grade quarterback John Hollingsworth had four touchdown passes, two of which went to eighth-grader Trent Brinthaup and two to eighth-grader Jonny Clifford. Clifford also had a touchdown run. In the second half eighth-grader Jacob Skymba had an interception. Redeemer was never able to move the ball well.

In their first home game on Sep. 20 against St. Ignatius, the Bears rolled to a 38-6 victory with six touchdowns. Clifford started the scoring fest with a touchdown run, followed by touchdown passes by Hollingsworth to Brinthaup, eighth-grader André Kuhn, and seventh-grader Garrison Ryberg. Setting up two of those touchdowns were interceptions from Clifford and Skymba. Midway through the second half Skymba came in as quarterback and threw a touchdown pass to Brinthaup and later scored on an option. The defense stood strong with 12 flag pulls and two sacks.

On Sep. 27 the Bears' rematch with Redeemer was suspended with the score tied 12-12 and BCS lining up for an extra point. It is unknown if the game will be resumed.

This year the BCS junior high football team has a whole new look. Last year's team was large and had a mixed group of seventh and eighth graders. This year, however, the team has only 11 members, and all but one are eighth graders.

The team expressed confidence in their ability and said that their goal is to win all their games and the post-season tournament.

"(Our goal) is to crush every team," Brinthaup said.

Coach Brian Hall said his goal for the season is to "improve over last year," when the team went 4-5.

"Since last year was our first, I hope this year marks a large step forward for our program," Hall said.

This year a post-season tournament is tentatively scheduled for the week of Oct. 24. Hall is optimistic about having a tournament, saying that if it does not make, he hopes Brentwood can host its own.

"I have proposed that we host the 'Brentwood Invitational' if the league doesn't already have something planned," Hall said.

The elementary 3A team is coached by David Peyton, and the 1A team is coached by David Trevino, a dad of two elementary students.



photo: Jeff Glenn

One-on-one Sixth-grader Preston Glenn gets ready to fake out his opponent from St. Theresa's Catholic in an elementary game on Friday, Sep. 16. The middle school team, coached by Brian Hall, is currently undefeated.

THE BEAR FACTS SEPTEMBER 2011

One month till theater opens

New facilities a “dream come true” for director Cindy Singleton

kailey **RODDEN**
reporter

Just last May, faculty and students alike were abuzz over the selection of the fall musical. When choir teacher Missy Weaver announced in chapel that it would be “The Sound of Music,” math teacher Kaleen Graessle squealed with delight along with many of the students. It didn’t take long until people were predicting who would play what part. Drama students beamed when talking about the new stage on which they would perform. From kindergarten to faculty, the whole school filled with anticipation.

On Friday, Oct. 28, “The Sound of Music” will break in the Iva Lea Worley Barton Theater at Brentwood Christian School. Cast and crew members have been busily rehearsing and preparing for the big show, which will be presented over two weekends instead of one.

Practices are held in the new building three days a week, with actors taking turns practicing with theater director Cindy Singleton and choir teacher Missy Weaver. Math and science teacher Cissy Johnson has been choreographing the dance scenes and instructing actors.

However, it’s not just the drama department doing all the work. The school band has a vital role in the production of the musical; orchestra practices take place during lunchtime.

In 1959, the famous musical songwriting duo Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein opened “The Sound of Music” on Broadway. The musical is loosely based on the true story of the Austrian family of widower Captain Georg von Trapp, his seven children, and their governess Maria. The musical quickly gained success and was made into a movie in 1965 that won four Academy Awards, including Best Picture.

“Mrs. Singleton and I chose it because everyone loves this show, we thought it would be a great opening musical for the new theater, it’s very family friendly, and it would involve stu-



photo: Mary Monacelli

Dancing with the Students High school students rehearse a waltz choreographed by Cissy Johnson, at right, in preparation for “The Sound of Music,” which opens Oct. 28.

dents of all ages,” Weaver said.

The last time BCS performed “The Sound of Music” was in 2000, when the Class of 2012 was in kindergarten. Instead of using the Family Life Center, Singleton rented out Pflugerville Middle School’s auditorium.

“I remember The Sound of Music being one of my first Brentwood experiences,” said senior Kayle Morin, who will play the role of Maria. “I was captivated by Cici Pedre (BCS ’02) and thought to myself, ‘When I get big, that is what I want to do.’ Little did I know that 13 years later I would be preparing to perform in that very same role.”

Starring along with Morin is senior Marcus McCormick, who will play Captain von Trapp in his first role with BCS. Senior Kailey Rodden and sophomore Bryce Morin, both theater veterans, are the dynamic duo Elsa Schraeder and Max Dettweiler. Senior Haley Decker, Encore member and theater rookie, will play Leisl.

Freshmen Tyler Clark and Haley Hudson play Friedrich and Louisa. Eighth-grader Jodie

Singleton is Brigitta, and seventh-grader Charlie Vasquez plays Kurt. Sixth-grader MaeAnne Herring is Marta, and fifth-grader Corrie Hager plays Gretl.

“It’s been interesting trying to learn the stage language and to play the actual role,” McCormick said. “It requires a skill set I haven’t used until this year.”

The Iva Lea Worley Barton Theater is more than just for show. Aside from the new stage, many luxuries have been added to enhance the experience for the audience, as well as for cast and crew. A state-of-the-art

sound and light system has been installed; instead of an old sound board, crew will be able to do everything from a touch-screen remote.

“I love the new sound system,” senior Sydney Jung said. “It’s going to make things so much easier.”

Underneath the stage is a vast open workshop – a haven for building and storing set pieces. A workman’s elevator has been installed to easily whisk large set pieces away. An orchestra pit will house the mixed student and teacher band, and actors now have a backstage bathroom and real changing rooms.

“It will be a dream come true in so many ways,” Singleton said of the new facilities. “First, for me, is to finally have a venue in which every audience member will be able to see and hear the show. Second, we are already enjoying the ability to come and rehearse on a stage; we don’t have to construct and tear down every time we rehearse. Third, I am so happy to provide my students with a performance space worthy of their talent, dedication, and commitment.”

Lee announces plans to return to Midland

anna **EWING**
reporter

Secondary principal Jared Lee announced at chapel on Sep. 1 that he will not be returning to Brentwood Christian next year. His wife, Stephanie, who will graduate from UT Law School in December, accepted a job offer from law firm Cotton Bledsoe in Midland.

Lee said he is sad about leaving because he loves all the students, teachers, and parents of the Brentwood community. But he said he is happy about his wife’s accomplishments and her hard work. He is also very thankful that she got a job and that it is close to his family.

“I want my daughter to see her grandparents more often, and this job offer is making that possible. It will be nice to be back with my family,” Lee said.

Lee plans on working at Midland Christian where his father, Eddie Lee, is the superintendent. Before coming to Brentwood, Lee was principal at the middle school there.

The Lees knew a job offer in Midland would be a possibility since she interned at the same firm for the last two summers. After she was offered the job in late August they decided they would move. Lee said it was a difficult decision because of all the hard work he has put into the school.

Lee’s main goal this year is to keep “business as usual” and make this transition as smooth as possible.

“I care very much for all the students and truly believe we’re going to have a great last year together,” he said.

Playscape

continued from page 1

Elementary principal Dr. Libby Weed said she is honored to receive this wonderful gift because outdoor play is necessary for the growth and development of children.

“Outdoor play is a crucial part of every school day,” Weed said. “Children simply love to go outside and play.”

Dead trees were recently cut down in the field where the playscape was placed due to this year’s unusually high temperatures and lack of rain. This has therefore greatly reduced the areas of shade for teachers to sit and children to play. The new playground will help fill the empty parts of the field, and part of the \$5,000 will go toward buying canopies to provide shade.

“We have recently lost some important trees in our play area to a severe drought, and putting this new playground into the bare spot will be a thrill to our students,” Dr. Weed said.

The prize money will also be used to cover

the timber border and concrete necessary for the landscape around the playscape, and the ribbon-cutting party attended by the kindergarten through second grades. A portion of the money will also be given to the Children’s Ark and Developmental Preschool programs.

Mohrmann has worked with TerraCycle before in fundraising through recycling. She has encouraged BCS students to recycle various goods such as CapriSun drink pouches.

In April, Mohrmann got an email from TerraCycle saying that their company was partnering with Old Navy to recycle flip flops. It also had a survey to fill out that would put the school in the running to win a playground.

“I filled it out and completely forgot about it,” Mohrmann said.

In May she received a phone call from TerraCycle following up on the survey. In August she received another phone call saying that BCS had won the playground, along with only three other schools in the nation.



photo: Elena Battle

Warm welcome Student Council member Rachel Dixon, left, talks with Anh Nguyen at the new student luncheon on Aug. 15, the day before school started. Following tradition, StuCo members shared pizza, toured the campus, played games, and “broke the ice” with their new classmates.