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# THE BEAR FACTS

VOL. 35 NO. 2

BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

DECEMBER 2022



see pg. 8



photo: Michelle Anthony

**State or bust!** The Lady Bears cross country team took home the state championship at their meet on Oct. 31 in Waco, and the Lady Bears volleyball team placed second in state in their five-set game against Grace Prep on Nov. 11, also in Waco.

## Lady Bears dominate at State

By Addison Everline

Brentwood Christian's fall sports season came to an exciting conclusion this year with two state podium finishes for the Lady Bears' cross country and volleyball teams. Cross country secured the TAPPS state championship on Oct. 31 at Cottonwood Creek Golf Course in Waco, beating out runner-up Lake Country Christian School by almost 20 points.

"It's obviously super exciting for the girls; I have been coaching cross country for 20-plus years, and we've been really close a lot of times," says head coach Katie Smith. "We got second place in track one year, and we've gotten third and fourth place several years, but

to actually win and get on the podium for first place is very exciting because it's never happened for us in cross country."

The team is led by freshman Harper Counts, who placed second overall at the meet with a time of 12:04, making her Counts, who continued her season after state by running in the NXR South Regionals, was the highest contributor to the overall team score, followed by junior Katie Pittner, who placed 15th with a time of 13:40, earning Academic All-State in the process.

"Harper has been our number one runner all year; she has the school record, and has the top times of any runner I've ever had at Brentwood," said Smith. "Obviously, having her

on the team helped us out. We also have a big group of junior girls who have been running for many years—they were solid in terms of numbers as well."

Smith says that what she is most excited about is that the team as whole was able to earn recognition for their hard work.

"I am just really happy for the girls. Cross country doesn't get a whole lot of accolades and doesn't get a lot of attention otherwise, so it's really nice for the girls to get some attention and to be honored for something that they did and were successful in," said Smith.

In addition to cross country's big win, volley-

see **VOLLEYBALL**, page 3

## Jog-a-Fun a traditional success

By Cody Shockey

Brentwood Christian students ran laps on the baseball outfield or made their way through the cross country trail during the annual Jog-a-Fun fundraiser on Nov. 9., all set to the festive theme of "Turkey Trot." Money was raised and bonds between students were strengthened. Some walked with friends while others ran the whole race. Everyone smiled when they made it to the end and received a cold treat, gourmet popsicles provided by Austin-based Mom and Pops Popsicles.

"It was really fun," eighth-grader Ava Cavada said. "We got to laugh and run together, and I loved it."

The fastest runners in the 5K run were senior Brecken Lee, sophomore Hollis Harlan, and freshman Nico Napper, who all finished in under 21 minutes. Eighth-grader Huxley Harlan was the top middle school runner, while junior Lauren Self was the top female runner.

Fundraising coordinator Sarah Wilson said she was glad to see so many students who signed up for the challenge run, but she noted that there were several more who should have. Runners who ran fast enough earned an ice cream sundae, which was awarded on that Friday.

Elementary runners were led by fifth-graders Evan Gittinger and Westin Hicks, who ran 33 laps each. The top girls, all running 28 laps, were fourth-graders Quay-Lynn Koch and Sarah Mulcahy, and fifth-grader Zoe McReynolds.

In lower elementary, first-grader Kian Crow led the boys, and second-grader Daryn Fisher led the girls, each with 27 laps.

By early December, Wilson said the total money raised was \$111,500.

see **JOG-A-FUN**, page 3

## Annual Christmas concerts bring good tidings to all

By Natalie McGee

Students once again entertained the BCS community with fall concerts in the past few days, beginning with the choir concert on Dec. 1 in the CSA theater.

Led by interim choir director Ashten Falter, sixth graders started things off, followed by seventh and eighth graders, and then the high school choir. The concert concluded with all choirs joining the audience in "The Lord Bless You and Keep You."

"I truly feel so happy to showcase my students' talents at the Christmas concert," said Falter, who has served as interim director this semester while the school searched for a permanent teacher. "I was blown away by the high caliber of talent at BCS, and have had a lot of fun challenging each student to be the best they can be."

Falter said her favorite part of teaching at BCS was getting to know each student and learning to trust each other.

"I am so grateful for my time here as the

choir director, and I am so excited to help out with the musicals in the future," she said.

A week later, on Dec. 8, the bands took the stage for their concert, with the high school continuing their traditional performances of "Sleigh Ride" and "A Christmas Festival."

Band director Travis Pollard was excited about performing one of his favorites, "Greensleeves," a challenging song that he played every year when he was in high

see **CHRISTMAS**, page 8

# Gen-Z showing interest in less-perfect past

Is Gen-Z tired of perfection?

Gen-Z is the first to be classified as “digital natives”—those who have never known a world without smartphones and instant connections via the internet.

This is in contrast to earlier generations, who have at least had to witness its growth from less perfect and slower origins. Gen-

Z, who are classified as those born between 1995 and 2012, has only known the internet as it basically is today: fast, reliable, and ever-present.

Millennials, although most came-of-age in a rapidly advancing era of technology, simply don't match up to Gen-Z's natural ease with all things digital. It's easy to understand why: a mechanic who has only recently discovered a shiny new tool is certainly going to be less comfortable with it than another who was practically born with the same tool in their hand.

How does this innate and early attained knowledge of the internet affect Gen-Z's opinion of it? Does it render them partially blind to its flaws, more vulnerable to its deceptions? Or perhaps Gen-Z has grown tired of the internet, tired of the perfection of a tool which has been held in their hands so long its shine is all worn off.

Exactly what does this weariness extend to? For many, it's social media, which accounts for an average of three hours of use per day for Gen-Z.

A report released by YPulse in 2019 notes that 79% of 13-26 year olds (the general age range for Gen-Z) are “tired of seeing perfect/polished images in advertising,” while 57% are tired of seeing perfect images in their social media feeds. Another 88% say that they like it when people showcase their flaws and imperfections. (See Cult of Ugly: YPulse.)

These statistics all contribute to a phenomenon currently dubbed “perfection fatigue”. It's quite simple: Gen-Z is tired of flawlessly polished images and content, and are more likely to connect with influencers and brands who make an effort to display their flaws and humanity.

This quest for “human” content by Gen-Z has also fueled the revival of CD and vinyl records, film cameras, and camcorders. Brands like Polaroid and Instax have seen massive growth in the past five years, most of it the responsibility of the age range mentioned above.

Gen-Z is determined to return to analog mediums, even if they aren't quite sure how to go about it. In the article “What's Really Behind the Vinyl Revival”, Josh Larue, co-owner of local Austin record store Breakaway Records has this to say:

“I have a conversation on a pretty regular basis with people who are buying

records. And I'll ask about a turntable or what they're doing right now. And they're like, oh, I don't have anything. Maybe they're listening to them at a friend's house or maybe it's easier to spend 20 bucks on used records than to spend hundreds of dollars on a turntable, or 400 dollars on a system. I get that. But I don't understand what they're doing with the record.”

Whether they are successful in their quest or not, the fact remains that Gen-Z is perfectly willing to spend money and confound their older counterparts in order to distance themselves from more sophisticated digital mediums and methods.

But why is this distance so important? Most have only pinpointed the symptoms of this need for imperfection, but the cause is still uncertain. Some cite the fact that past decades are often glamorized online, leading Gen-Z to romanticize times before smartphones and social media, which to us children of the digital age seems almost impossible. The comeback of 90s grunge and Y2K aesthetics in modern fashion also points to this romanticization of the past, that Gen-Z is eager enough for earlier decades to embrace trends that have only recently graduated from the status of “tacky”.

I think there is some truth in this claim, even speaking from my rank among those who avidly seek imperfection online, whether consciously or not. Even while setting in-

ternet glamour aside, it's easy for Gen-Z to build up the past in our minds, because we hear about it from our parents all the time. Stories of getting lost in new cities without a GPS, but having an adventure nonetheless. Remembered complaints of having to wait to get home to make a call because cell phones weren't quite mainstream yet. Recollections of what it was like to go out all night with friends, never posting a single thing.

It's also interesting to note that we only truly embrace eras where technology certainly still existed. This is telling: we don't want to fully give up our favorite toy, but we do seem to be ready to revert back to an earlier version of it, even if that is only through music and photos.

What does this reveal about the future of our generation? To me, mostly good things. Yes, perhaps in our pursuit of imperfection we often fall into hypocrisy, seeking out a life that is perfectly imperfect.

But I believe on the whole this love for things of the past points to a generation who is ready for change. The internet will always play a role in our lives. But we are not enslaved by it or our phones, as many believe. Instead, we are looking for ways to step away from its hold on our lives.

Even if it is only for a few, imperfect moments at a time.

## THE BEAR FACTS

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

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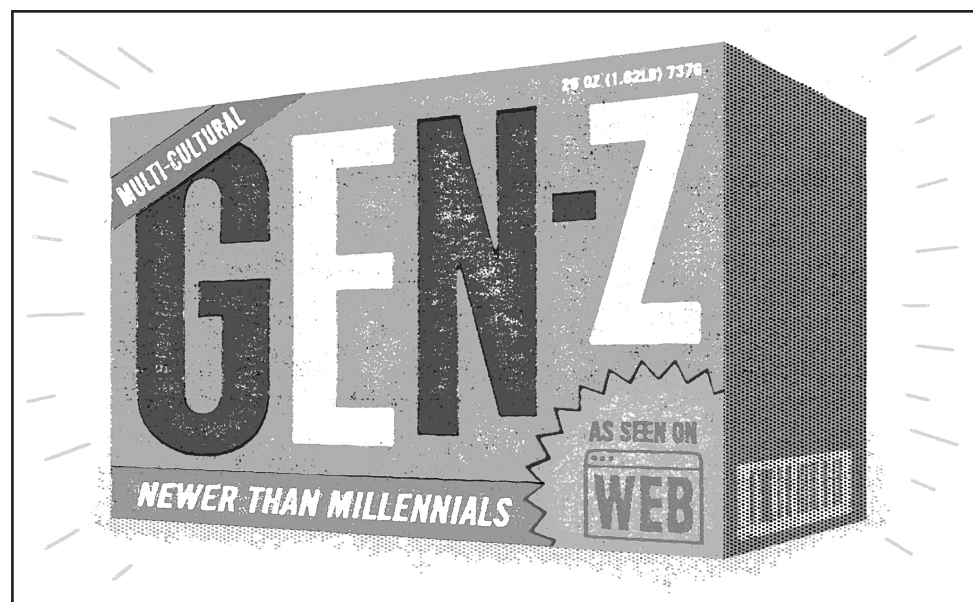


photo: The New York Times

**Perfection fatigue** A 2019 advertising report conducted by Meta with Gen-Z and millennial participants indicated that there was an 84% likelihood that self-recorded, mobile-shot video would outperform studio-shot video in views.



# Jog-a-Fun brings smiles, treats, prizes to students

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“To actually have met this goal on Jog-a-Fun day was huge,” she said.

Jog-a-Fun could not have happened without the help of many volunteers. Brentwood youth minister and BCS dad James Henley and BCS mom Lauren Warner played big roles in making the day a success. Henley put together a video he filmed throughout the day, and Warner, a former BCS employee, was the Jog field coordinator.

Wilson said she was pleased to see the number of volunteers who were not only helpful as they always are but also having fun while helping bring this event to life.

At the awards assembly on Dec. 7, several lucky students won big prizes and fun activities to do with friends. Students who entered 20 or more sponsor letters and raised at least \$150 were entered into a drawing to get a chance to win prizes.

A lower elementary student won an Austin Aquarium trip; for upper elementary students, it was a trip to a local trampoline park. A middle school student won a Kalahari all-day pass with some friends. Four high school students walked away with \$150 Amazon gift cards.

Students who participated in Jog-a-fun and met the requirements stated above earned a day off of school on April 28, 2023.

# Long-time CFO says farewell

By Lucy Belcik

Chief financial officer Jeff Morris is leaving the Brentwood finance department after a decade of service. This change comes after a job offer from Prodigy Health, a major pharmaceuticals distributor based in Austin. Morris will be serving as their CFO.



Morris

“I encouraged him to take the job,” said school president Jay Burcham. “It’s an amazing opportunity for him that I would not have let him

pass up.”

Currently, the finance department is in the care of Denise Riley, serving as interim controller, alongside Angela Taylor, who is working as senior accountant manager. Burcham shared that the accounting office also plans on making two additional hires. This new organizational structure will remain until the spring of 2023 and will then be re-evaluated.

Students will know Morris best as the energetic advisor of StuCo, emceeing events and leading students. Members of the BCS administration will remember him as a highly organized and strategic leader, responsible for much of the financial development of the school in his time at Brentwood.

“He has organized our financial department so that we are able to have things like the lowest private school tuition around,” said

see CFO, page 8



photo: BCS Yearbook

**Run faster!** (L-R) Juniors Zandria Davis, Julian Jimenez, Jisoo Han, Yasmim Seibert, and Ike Ruiz are sprayed with bubble filled water guns as they begin their 5K race.

# Brentwood welcomes new choir director

By Lucy Belcik

Tammy Ramalho joins the BCS community as the new choral director for 4th through 12th grade. Ramalho’s 20 years of experience includes background as a vocal, piano, and clarinet teacher. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Music and Leadership from Cumberland College. Ramalho most recently served as a music teacher with Velociy Music Academy in Cedar Park, which also included work with Hill Country Christian School through Velocity.

Ramalho can be found already on campus, assisting with classes and concerts, and will begin directing full time beginning in January.

Ramalho takes over from interim director Ashten Falter, who has served Brentwood’s choir program since September of this year.



Ramalho

photo: Brandy Gauthier

# Volleyball team falls in five-set state championship game

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ball also made Brentwood proud this season, becoming both district and regional champions, as well as runner-up in the TAPPS 4A volleyball state championship in Waco.

On Thursday, Nov. 3, the Lady Bears battled Boerne Geneva for the title of regional champs and to move onto the state championship in a close five-set game. The Lady Bears couldn’t hang on in the first set 25-17, causing them to fall behind but they clawed their way back, taking the fifth set 15-10.

“Freshmen Claire Montgomery and Ken-

dal Roberson are players that stand out because this is their first year to play varsity and they didn’t let the better teams intimidate them. Ashlynn Alvarado was an all-around force and Parker Kimball just made things happen with her hustle and energy,” said head coach Rory Tyson.

Montgomery and Roberson both led in kills in the Lady Bears’ district championship game against John Paul. The Lady Bears then advanced to the state semifinal game against Veritas, where they made a clean sweep in a three-set game, winning the third set 25-17.

“The girls kept their focus and played well

together as a team. They played in big games that mattered against good teams. The past few years we haven’t been able to do that so it was definitely a step in the right direction,” says Tyson.

The team then took on Grace Prep for the state championship where they fought hard in an extremely close 5-set game. Both teams were 2-2 in sets, depending on the fifth set to bring them home, which unfortunately ended with Grace Prep winning 15-12.

The team has had a very successful season with 44 wins and a 21-game win streak breaking last year’s school record.

Tyson says she is proud of “so many things, but the intangibles are what make me the proudest as a coach: being complimented by other coaches and officials, opponents’ fans, about our level of play and the way we hustle and play defense, and our character and attitudes on the court.”

For next season the team is already setting bigger goals to accomplish and plans to work hard during the off-season.

“That’s the thing we’re going to work most on developing - the inner drive to always give maximum effort,” says Tyson.



**SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Evan Gruis**

*Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2023.*

# Encouraging senior is a role model to all

By Lucy Belcik

Whether he's hard at work on the court or raising hype in the stands, it's likely that most Brentwood sports fans would easily recognize **Evan Gruis** both for his talent and excess of school spirit.

Evan and basketball go all the way back to fifth grade, when he played for the middle school team. Since then he's gone on to play for the entirety of his high school career, earning first team all-district in his junior year, as well as academic all-state.

"Evan's growth as a leader, player, and young man has been a privilege to watch," says Dustin Karrer, head basketball coach. "Last year he was a great example of how to be coachable and take instruction, this year he has been the example of how to comport yourself as a Brentwood basketball player and student."

One thing Evan's learned from playing on a team for so long is not only how to improve himself, but also how to help others improve.

"It definitely helped my people skills, having to learn how to manage people and work with teammates and coaches. But I also learned how to build people up and figure out how to make things happen as a team."

Friends and coaches recognize this encouraging spirit in Evan as well.

"He's kind and considerate to anyone he meets and he's a really good example to anyone who looks up to him," says senior Ben Gaitlin.

"He treats people with kindness, excels as a mentor, and constantly seeks growth," says junior varsity basketball coach and teacher Connor White. "He is the kind of guy that I would want my son to be like someday, and I am proud to coach him."

Evan says his favorite team memory is as simple as attending open gyms in the summer, practicing with his teammates and hanging out.

"Just getting to hoop together is my favorite thing," says Evan.

This character of leadership extends off the court as well. A member of NHS since sophomore year, Evan is also active in the Brentwood Oaks youth group, serving as a counselor for Camp Agape and attending Camp Blue Haven in Las Vegas, NM.

He says something that has impacted him a lot in his time with the youth group has been getting to go on the group's annual Tulsa mission trip to serve underprivileged children in Oklahoma.

"The mission trip has been so impactful. I enjoy working with younger kids, and getting to show them the good news has been such a great experience," says Evan.

In addition to these acts of service, Evan also had the opportunity to serve as aide to youth minister James Henley his junior year.

"It was cool to be able to build a closer relationship with someone who is so knowledgeable," says Evan.

"I definitely learned a lot."

Evan has attended Brentwood since the third grade, alongside his sister Adrie Gruis, who graduated with the senior class of 2020.

Sharing his

sister's love of music, Evan enjoys playing the guitar in his free time. He's been on the yearbook staff for the first three years of high school, as well as worked running crew for the musical.

When asked what he would take with him after leaving high school behind, Evan says that what he values the most from his time spent at Brentwood is the relationships he got to build.

"Getting to be with the same guys since third grade is such a unique thing," says Evan. "The fact that we got to grow up together and face the same challenges together is super important to me."

Others value the relationships they've been able to build with Evan as well.

"Evan and I have been buddies since the third grade. We spent many days building forts, driving four wheelers, and dreaming of different cool things to try that were more or less impossible for us to pull off," says best friend and senior Brecken Lee. "Evan is a strong person and stands up for what he believes in. He is a friend to all on campus."

"Evan is one of the best guys I know," says Gatlin.

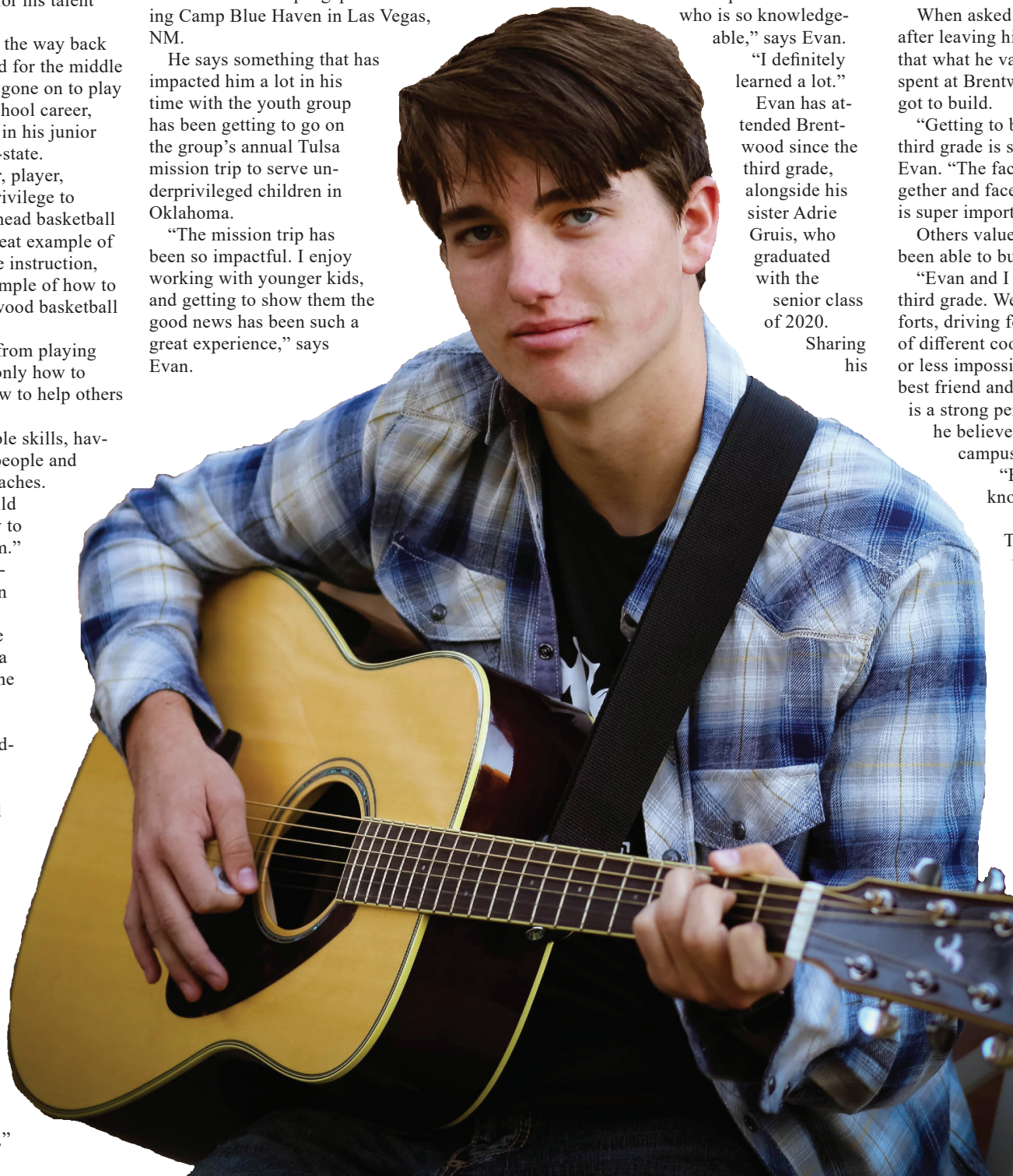
Evan plans on attending Texas A&M for his undergraduate degree and is interested in the field of finance.

No matter what his future holds, it's clear that his innate qualities of leadership and service will take him far.

Coach White says he hopes that Evan is not only remembered as a talented basketball player, but also a young man of high character.

"He is leaving a great legacy on the basketball court, but I hope people remember Evan for far more than his ability to play a game," says White.

"Evan is a light on this campus who leads with humility and reflects his confidence in Christ. He will do great things because people want to be around guys like Evan Gruis."





# Art teacher, yearbook adviser big on community bonds

By Quinn Kirchoff

Lindsey Smith has been a teacher at Brentwood for four years. She first started teaching art only, then began to teach the yearbook class as another means of expressing her passion for art. She grew up in Oklahoma in a big family, and always stuck close with her siblings, with whom she went through thick and thin together.

Smith attended Northeastern State University in Oklahoma, where she earned a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Ceramic and Sculpture. From Oklahoma, she moved to Austin, where she got married and found an opening at Brentwood Christian, a school that shared her same beliefs and morals.

Smith enjoys doing anything creative in

her free time. She quilts, creates illustrations, and writes poetry. She and her husband enjoy going to Zilker Park together, where they bring a lunch and sit and watch the soccer or volleyball games that are going on, enjoying the outdoors and Austin. They have a favorite food truck, Spicy Boys Fried Chicken, which serves chicken sandwiches. It is inspired by Malaysian and Thai flavors.

Smith met her husband in a ceramics art class in college. They were friends for a long time before they started dating. They connected well in their morals, values, and faith. He invited Smith to a Church of Christ event. They now attend the University College Church of Christ, which is downtown.

"Teaching has really shown me a new thought process in life. The students are so positive towards me, and that accepting attitude helped me grow and feel more comfortable in my position," said Smith.

"Mrs. Smith is very friendly and good at art: she's very personable with students," remarked sophomore Sofia Geevarghese.

"Mrs. Smith is very caring and tries to help students if we don't understand something and she is very laid-back, and we always have fun in her class," commented freshman Zach Czer-

linsky.

Being a BCS student is all about community and helping one another out. Brentwood provides many ways to get involved in the community, one of them being yearbook.

"Everyone is super relaxed and puts their

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*"When you design the yearbook for so many years you get to see the more intricate parts of Brentwood. The friendships, the teamwork, and the community that they build together."*

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minds to paper when designing their part of the yearbook," Mrs. Smith shared.

Yearbook is all about working behind the scenes to create a book to perpetuate memories and events to look back on for years to come. You don't have to be a tech prodigy or a photography master to join in. If anyone is creative and looking for a way to branch out, share their ideas, and write memorable journalistic stories about the school and the Brentwood family, then yearbook is the place to be.

"When it comes down to it, the goal is to create a good yearbook for everyone to enjoy, but community is also really important to me," says Smith.

Yearbook has created a new way of reaching out to the Brentwood students through the Instagram page, which is free for anyone to follow and freely submit any photos from Brentwood events they would like in the yearbook or any photos that didn't make last year's edition.

Students can gain experiences and friendships when you join a community, Smith says.

"When you design the yearbook for so many years you get to see the more intricate parts of Brentwood. The friendships, the teamwork, and the community that they build together," says Smith.

## Senior becomes Eagle Scout

By Lucy Belcik

Senior Ashton Smith of Troop 505 was recognized as an Eagle Scout by the Boy Scouts of America on Nov. 3. His project, which consisted of the restoration of a stone labyrinth built over 20 years ago by another scout, was actually completed early in September.

"After submission, it became a waiting game," said Smith.

Once the paperwork was processed, Smith was able to schedule and attend his Board of Review and officially receive the award.

Restoration of the labyrinth included Smith installing a weed barrier beneath the structure, rebuilding it to its original design, and shoveling granite around the base of the blocks to ensure its survival for many more years. Smith also installed a water line beneath the labyrinth for a potential water feature in the future.

The labyrinth, housed by Oak Hill United Methodist Church, is intended as a place for quiet meditation and prayer, and serves as a metaphor for the user's spiritual journey.

Smith completed the project with the help of eight volunteers, which included his family, boss, and a representative from Oak Hill. He says he is most thankful for the help of his Eagle Mentor, Scott Weishaar.

"He continuously encouraged me to continue my trail to Eagle, and helped me push through all the work that needed to be completed as I approached my deadline," said Smith.



photo: Scott Weishaar

**Flying high** Senior Ashton Smith was officially recognized as an Eagle Scout by the Boy Scouts of America on Nov. 3.



**Blue skies** Brentwood art teacher Lindsey Smith pauses to smile while kayaking on Town Lake. Smith enjoys spending time in downtown Austin and Zilker Park with her husband.



# With immense talent, boys have high playoff goals

By Karlee Lawrence

Led by Head Coach Dustin Karrer, the boys' basketball team hopes to make a run towards

playoffs this year and is 7-6 currently.

"We are excited for an opportunity to compete for a district title, have high playoff goals, and want to get to #1 in the state rankings. We are currently ranked #2 in the state and proud of the way we have competed and handled ourselves versus a very competitive schedule. Our biggest challenge is treating every-day like it is the biggest day of the year. Our goal is to improve 1% each day," Karrer stated.

The team has three extremely talented guards: Evan Gruis, Mason Emerson, and Levi Rutledge, and is anchored by forwards Nick

Makumi and newcomer sophomore Blake Petty. Petty leads the team in scoring, with an average of 15.7 points per game. Senior Nicholas Makumi leads in rebounds, with 10.7, and senior Levi Rutledge leads in assists with 5.3.

Brentwood will begin playing district games on Dec. 13 at Geneva.

Following are the boy's most recent results:

**11/5 vs San Antonio Christian 75-61 W**

On Nov. 5, the Bears played San Antonio Christian. The Bears started the games strong with a 13 point lead in the first quarter, and kept the lead until the half, gaining 18 more points; putting the Bears at 43 to 21. San Antonio was able to adjust to the Bears winning the third and fourth quarter. Even with the adjustment, the Bears had too strong of a lead a game out with the win. Rutledge led with 21 points and seven assists. Both Senior Evan Gruis and Makumi grabbed 12 rebounds.

**11/8 vs South Austin 66-37 W**

Starting off strong, the Bears were able to continuously work together to rack up points. Makumi led with 16 points and grabbed 12 rebounds, while Rutledge led with six assists.

**11/15 vs Mumford 77-73 L**

Brentwood started off by letting Mumford win the first half of the game. After the half, the Bears took the opportunity to score the same amount of points as Mumford in the

third quarter and won the fourth by seven points. Though the boys were able to pick up speed, they were short four points. Petty led with 25 points and 12 rebounds.

**11/18 vs. Stony Point t 72-41 L**

The Bears lost their away game against the Stony Point Tigers on Nov. 18.

**11/21 vs. Westwood 55-44 L**

The Bears went up against Round Rock Westwood on Nov. 21, eventually losing their away game.

**12/1-12-3 Centex Tournament W W W W**

The Bears started out with the heat against Texas School for the Deaf, displaying their talents and coming out with a 27-point lead by the half. With a strong performance, Brentwood won 60-21, starting off the home tournament strong. Bears came off of their first tournament win strong, defeated Northeast Early College 85-61. The second day into the tournament the boys were still using their momentum to defeat Legacy Prep 74-59.

**12/6 vs. San Marcos High School 89-68 L**

Brentwood played the 6A state-ranked public school team with Division I players; they hung tight in the first quarter, but San Marcos broke it open in the 2nd quarter, and led by 22 at the half. Bears played even in the third quarter and San Marcos finished ahead by 21 points.



photo: BCS Yearbook

**Reaching out** Senior Levi Rutledge plays defense on Dec. 1 in the Bear's game against Northeast Early College. Rutledge, new to BCS, leads the team in assists and steals.

## Boys' soccer starts strong

By Jack Gonzalez

The Bears' soccer team, led by head coach Cash Miller, is off to a great start with a 5-2 win against St. Anthony. The Bears are very excited to start their season and "have a lot of potential," according to sophomore player Gino Burke.

"We are a very young team," said Burke.

Burke also believes that they have a lot to accomplish.

When asked what the team's goals were for this season he stated "Our goal this season is to make playoffs and get a home playoff game."

So far the Bears have played only two games, winning their first against St. Antho-

ny's, scoring five goals, and allowing only two in.

The Bear's second game was against St. Michael's and ended in a loss, as St. Michaels put up three goals and Brentwood only one.

Junior Ike Ruiz leads the team statistically with three assists, nine top shots on goal, and two goals. Junior Andrew Davis, goalie, has 11 saves.

The Bears' next game is scheduled for Dec 13th, against St Andrews. (JV/V)

"I think we have a good chance of winning state. We just have to work hard and stay focused," commented sophomore Victor Martinez.

## Baseball eager to begin upcoming season

By Jack Gonzalez

Winter is upon us, which means that baseball season is rapidly approaching. The Bears' schedule is still being finalized, but the season is set to begin in late February to early March, with possible scrimmages before then.

The Bears have some big shoes to fill after losing 11 seniors after graduation, along with playing a very successful season last year.

Last year's baseball team won an astonishing 29 games, only losing three.

Former seniors Seth Taylor, Jake Amoroso, and Jack Spring led the team in multiple categories including Taylor's nine home runs and

his 146 strikeouts. Amoroso would lead the team with a .531 batting average and 47 RBI's while Spring led the team with a 1.48 ERA.

Despite losing many players from last season, juniors Jamie Nauman and Tabor Tyson are optimistic this season can be special.

"I'm very excited for this season and this team," said Tyson when asked what his thoughts were on the upcoming season.

Nauman agreed and said, "This team has potential and a chance at district this year."

"I feel like we'll surprise people and do really well, we've been working really hard to do our best," said Jason Liliya, the team's only returning senior.



# Girls start slow, but hope for growth

By Bear Facts Staff

Led by new Head Coach Julie Walker, the Lady Bears are off to a rocky start for the 2022 season, but have hopes for improvement.

The girls currently have a 2-9 record overall.

A prolonged end to the volleyball season meant that many players were unable to begin practice until early November.

“Considering our limited time with so many players coming out of the fall sports season, I have been impressed with the improvements we have made in a short amount of time,” said Walker.

Walker says key players for the team this year include junior point guard Aubrey Acheson, junior guard Zariah Williams, and her sophomore guard sister Zaniah Williams. All are returning players. Zariah leads the team in assists per game, while Zaniah leads in points and steals. Freshman forward Rachel Walker leads in rebounds per game.

“The key for the team this year is to lean on the experience of those who have been in the program before,” said Walker.

In addition to these players, Walker says that juniors Abbie Burcham and Tynneson Allen, alongside sophomore, Karlee Lawrence provide “a combination of a stretch 4/post presence.”

Despite challenges,

Walker shared that she is confident the girls will improve as the season goes on if they play aggressive and smart on the defensive end of the floor.

“Our goal first and foremost is to play with passion, toughness, and teamwork. For the season, I would like to see our team finish towards the top of our district and make a solid run through the playoffs,” said Walker.

“The season isn’t going how we want right now, but we are improving quickly and heading in the right direction,” said Acheson.

Following are summaries of the girl’s most recent three games, in reverse order:

## 12/6 vs. St. Andrew’s 65-35 L

The Lady Bear’s went up against the St. Andrew’s Highlanders in their home game on Dec. 6. Strong from the start, the Highlanders were ahead for all four quarters, eventually beating out the girls with a score of 65-35.

## 12/3 vs. Incarnate Word 53-31 L

The Lady Bear’s lost their neutral tournament game against the Incarnate Word Angels on Dec. 3. The girls started off slow, but were able to finish strong despite the loss. Allen and Acheson worked hard, scoring a combined 28 points for the team.

## 12/2 vs. TMI (score needed)W

Although they began with a rocky start, the girls picked it up by the second half of the game, going on to win their home tournament game against the TMI Panthers. Acheson led in points, scoring 25 for the Lady Bears.



photo: BCS Yearbook

**Flight school** Zaniah Williams takes to the air in the Lady Bear’s Dec. 1 game against the Cedar Creek Eagles. Williams, a sophomore, led the team in points and steals.

# Soccer girls grow with new coach

By Bear Facts staff

Under the guidance of a new coach, the 13 members of the high school girls’ soccer team have spent the fall working out and preparing to make great strides this season.

Due to the success of the volleyball season, the Lady Bears did not have the benefit of practicing with the full team until right before Thanksgiving. The team played an early game in November, losing to Boerne Geneva. Their next game was on Tuesday, Dec. 13 against St. Andrew’s.

Brentwood’s next game will be their first home game, on Jan. 3 against Temple Holy

Trinity.

New third-grade teacher Emma Hinson has taken the head coaching responsibilities from Cash Miller, who will only coach the varsity boys this year. Hinson is a recent graduate of Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, where she played on the school’s soccer team. Along the way, she picked up experience coaching in camps and club soccer.

Hinson said her expectations for the team are not about wins and losses this year, but to have everyone be consistently present for games and practices, and to “glorify God through the love of a sport that we as a team all share, together.”

“My goals for the team are to play together, as a unit, and to get one percent better each day,” Hinson said. “I have seen so much improvement in the team already, and I am very excited to see how we can continue to improve.”

Junior Macie Griswold and senior Ashlynn Alvarado are two players that Hinson expects will play leadership roles on the team.

“It’s so rewarding to watch the team improve and grow as the season goes on,” said Griswold. “I’m super excited for the season and to hopefully get some wins!”

# Swim team starts season

By Ashleigh Butler

Brentwood’s two-man and one-woman swim team enters their second season at BCS. The swim team consists sophomores Gus Ebner and Reid Alexander, who are both returning for their second year on the team, along with Freshman Ashleigh Butler, who is making her debut this year. The team hopes to go to state for TAPPS this year and is expecting a good season.

The team is coached by BCS dad Troy Alexander, father of Reid.

“This is our second year; last year we made state, and I think we will do it again,” said Alexander. “Personally, I think we would all like to place this year. I am confident we will all make state. It has been much more organized this year than last year.”

The team has already swum in one TAPPS meet, which was held at Texas School for the Deaf. Ebner placed second in both the 50 yard freestyle and the 100 yard breaststroke and 3rd in the 100 yard freestyle, Alexander placed first in the 200 yard freestyle and second in both the 100 yard butterfly and the 100 yard backstroke. Butler placed second in the 100 yard backstroke and fourth in the 200 yard freestyle.

Each swimmer specializes in a particular stroke, with Ebner primarily a breaststroke swimmer, Alexander a butterfly swimmer, and Butler practiced at the backstroke. Overall, the team feels great about the meet and is ready to approach their next meet in January with energy. They are hopeful to bring home more hardware at the next meet.

Each of the swimmers trains separately with their own club. Ebner trains with Waterloo, Alexander with GOLD, and Butler with Texas Longhorn Aquatics. They each train for two to four hours a day in order to stay in shape for their meets.



photo: Troy Alexander

**Swimmingly** From left to right, the Brentwood swim team: freshman Ashleigh Butler and sophomores Gus Ebner and Reid Alexander.



# Fall Festival a festive success

By Lucy Garcia

A cool breeze flowed through the Brentwood campus on October 29 and brought fall festivities with it. BCS held its annual Fall Festival this year, which was a huge success in bringing in approximately \$4000 to the school this year. 143 pre-sale wristbands were sold and an additional 126 sold on site.

There were many fun booths and activities this year including axe throwing, a rock wall, cake walk, obstacle course and a fan favorite, the dunking booth.

Sophomore Maeryn McCormick says her favorite part about fall fest is getting to dunk the Seniors in the dunking tank.

"I also enjoy running all the fun booths," McCormick says.

Food vendors could be found all around the festival like O's Chop House, Hey Cup-Cake and the returning Hot Dog King. The booths were spread out around campus this year but mostly outside, with the cake walk inside. Many different kinds of cakes, cupcakes, and cookies were donated to the cakewalk, which made it exciting for each student to pick out the treat they wanted to take home.

"Even though there was less participation than last year due to illness, we still had a great turnout again this year," head of PTF Jennifer Smeltzer said.



**Aiming high** Kindergartener Mason McMinn poses for the camera from the rock wall featured at this year's festival. photo: BCS Yearbook

## Christmas concerts

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school.

Seventh and eighth graders played the song "Elf Dance," featuring "low voice" instruments such as the bassoon, baritone, trombone, bass clarinet, baritone saxophone, and tuba in the melody.

"They don't usually get the melody, so it's fun for them," Pollard said.

Between the choir and band con-

certs was pianist Don Irwin's 10th annual Christmas concert for the Brentwood community on Dec. 6.

Santa Claus made a special appearance, posing for pictures with the children before the concert, surrounded by festive decorations.

After the concert, a dessert reception was held.

## CFO's departure

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Burcham.

Burcham also notes Morris' strategic mind, which alongside himself, helped lead to the advent of new programs at BCS such as football and the Lady Bellas.

Morris also worked to increase the value of the Brentwood campus through beautification and to invest in new offerings for students, whether that be AP classes or fine arts.

Above all, Burcham says, Morris

is a man of God.

"One of the things about Jeff that is true through and through is that he loves God. You might walk past his office and find him praying alone. That's something that means a whole lot."

It's certainly true that many in the Brentwood offices will miss Morris, and not only for his many contributions to his department.

"I will miss the person the most," says Burcham. "He is a great man and a great friend."

# Young writers enjoy week of reading, costumes, celebration

By Max Fuentes

The Young Author's Contest is a creative way for elementary students to express themselves in written form. Students from kindergarten through fifth grade are given the opportunity to write an original short story with illustrations, which are either hand-drawn or chosen from the internet.

Books are to be submitted online or on paper and given to Elementary Librarian Shaelee Bak by the middle of October. Brentwood often has a multitude of children turning in books every year but this year was extremely successful, with 82 books sent as entries.

Each year the Young Author's Writing Contest is celebrated with a parade and parties for the members of the young authors contest and prizes are given. Books receive awards, which are chosen by a

panel of judges. Each author receives a certificate, which range in categories from most creative to most realistic. There are also Overall Excellent awards given to a single student in each grade.

In the past there were more difficulties receiving original book entries but this year most of the books were turned in online so it was easier and more accessible for students to submit their stories.

An exceptional story was written by second-grader Manny Naido. Naido's story is about an unlikely friendship between two chameleons and ends with two chameleons learning about their mistakes and becoming friends.

The results of the contest are traditionally announced at the conclusion of elementary's "Book Week", on the much-anticipated Character Day. This year students and teachers alike dressed up to match their favorite characters from books and film.



**The Boy Who Lived** Fifth-grader Ryan Kuczynski shows off his magical costume and book at elementary's annual Character Day. photo: BCS Yearbook