



THE BEAR FACTS



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BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

MARCH 2015

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IN SHORT

Moss wins award

Marquita Moss was given the Don Gardner Award for Service at the National Christian School Association Conference in Atlanta last weekend. Moss, who will retire at the end of the year, said she and her BCS colleagues were completely surprised by the award, which recognized her tireless advocacy for Christ-centered education and decades spent serving Christian schools across the nation.

PSIA district

After waiting through a two-hour weather delay, BCS elementary and middle school students placed fourth in the PSIA district meet at Redeemer Lutheran on Feb. 28. The following nine students qualified for the state meet in Ft. Worth on April 25: Andrew Geevarghese (Maps, Graphs, and Charts 6 and Number Sense 6); Emma Nguyen (Math 7 and Number Sense 7); Emma Ayers (Music Memory 5-6); Juliet Booker (Music Memory 3-4); Sydney Cooper (Ready Writing 5); Zoey Hamiyeh (Spelling 6); Bella Mills (Ready Writing 6); Aaron Mohrmann (On-Site Drawing 7); and Darrin Nguyen (Number Sense 8).

Eighth-grade D.C. trip

Twenty-eight BCS eighth graders and six sponsors will embark on the annual Washington, D.C., trip on Sunday, March 15, and will return Wednesday. They will make stops at the Arlington National Cemetery, Smithsonian Museums, Lincoln Memorial, White House, Library of Congress, and several war memorials.

Seniors finally enjoying Italy trip

By Jenna Beggs

From the excitement of shopping with friends to the thrill of seeing sights like the Roman Colosseum and Catacombs, the seniors are all geared up for their Italy trip.

"I can't believe we are finally leaving," Megan Burcham said when the trip was less than a week away. "I've been looking forward to this trip since I was five."

A group of 28 BCS students plus parents and sponsors left from Austin on March 12 and landed in London. Friday, they will fly into Milan, Italy, and then they will visit some of the world's most famous places as they travel from Venice to Florence to Rome.

"I'm really looking forward to taking Polaroid pictures," Maddie Ashworth said.

While Ashworth expressed disappointment that she won't be able to visit Pompeii, she said she happy to be touring Italy with friends like Kate Zipperer, who is also

thrilled to have so much time with friends.

"I am so excited to share a room with my three best friends," Zipperer said.

Today, the second day of the trip, the seniors and sponsors arrived in Milan and stopped in Verona on their way to Venice. Among many other highlights, this is where most seniors will have their first Italian gelato.

"I am so stoked for the gelato," Christian Montgomery said.

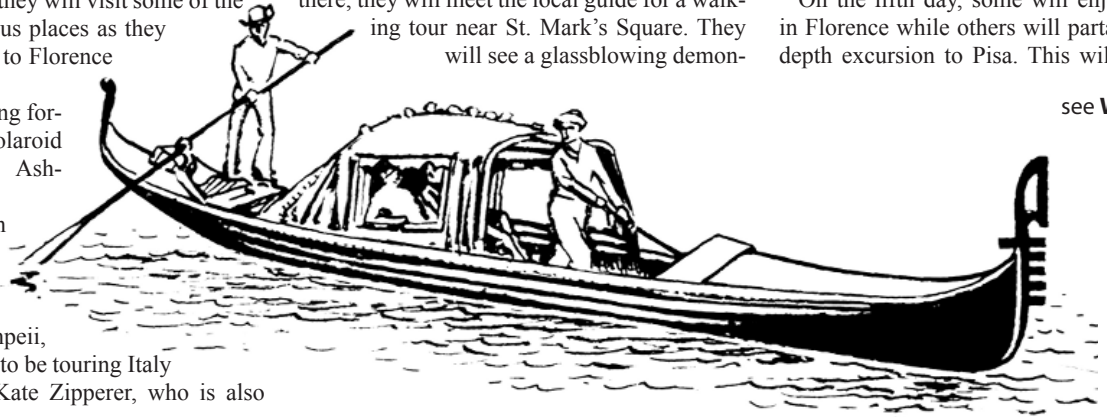
Tomorrow will be the third day of the trip, and it will be spent sightseeing in Venice, where they will arrive by water taxi. Once there, they will meet the local guide for a walking tour near St. Mark's Square. They will see a glassblowing demon-

stration, teaching the historical value of Venetian glass, and they will visit Doge's Palace for a self-guided tour. In the afternoon, the seniors will have some free time to explore Venice before taking a water-taxi back to their hotel for dinner.

The fourth day of the Italy trip will be spent transferring to Florence for sightseeing. Upon arrival after a five-hour transfer, the group will have lunch and take a walking tour of central Florence. After their tour they will stop by a local leatherworks showroom for a quick demonstration.

On the fifth day, some will enjoy free time in Florence while others will partake in an in-depth excursion to Pisa. This will be a guid-

see Wait, page 3



Football program nets \$120K at fundraiser

By Lila Therrell

Brentwood Christian School's new tackle football program got quite a boost, raising approximately \$120,000 during the Football Kickoff Celebration and Fundraiser in the FLC on Feb. 28.

Next year's football players sold about 380 tickets for the event. Those who attended the party were able to help the school reach the goal needed to put teams on the field next fall.

Brentwood currently has 22 high school players on their six-man team and 30 middle school players on their eleven-man team.

According to BCS chief operating officer Jay Burcham, some of the funds raised will go toward making the new football practice field. They plan to do this by converting and raising the soccer field and adding brand new turf and goalposts. This will be the practice area for the high school team, since six-man football is played on a smaller field. The school plans to rent a stadium for the middle school team to

practice on until they can build a brand new stadium behind the school.

Burcham said they also plan to use the funds for new equipment. He made it very clear that safety was a main priority for the new program, and all of the equipment that will be used will be recommended by a doctor and of high quality. They also plan to keep a certified medic on the sidelines for all games in case of an emergency.

Burcham also stressed that this new program will not change the fact that Brentwood is an academic school. More importantly, he said, football will not distract from the mission of the school, which is to lead students to love God.

"Football will not change Brentwood," he said. "It will become part of what Brentwood is."

There will be fundraising for three years, Burcham said, until the costs of the team are

see Football, page 7



photo: Dorothy Walters

Catching up BCS president Marquita Moss talks with Charlie Tanner, an offensive lineman for the Longhorns from 2006-09. Tanner attended BCS through eighth grade.

Being ForthReich: Jonathon Reich

Editor calls for paws to ponder bear necessities

One of the utmost responsibilities of a reporter is to represent a situation with fairness and accuracy in their work. This is one of the driving forces of journalism, and one that The Bear Facts staff has, to the best of its ability, held up. Yet for years, we have continually failed on one point of accuracy – now I would like to set that straight.

Despite being named the “Bear Facts,” our newspaper has never posted a single fact about bears. As a reporter, I find this simply unbearable; and to make up for lost time, I hope to include enough information to keep you telling your friends bear trivia for years to come.

Before we get into the serious trivia, let’s paws and begin with a general overview of bears, so we can all start on the same page. There are eight common species of bears – the brown bear, asian black bear, american black bear, sun bear, spectacled bear, giant panda, sloth bear, and polar bear – who also go by their biological family name, Ursidae. If you’re

wondering where koalas fit into this mix, they don’t! They’re actually marsupials, and unrelated to the bear family.

Bears are mostly solitary creatures, who enjoy a nice gulp of fermented berry juice and their long winter’s hibernation. It is during this hibernation that females give birth to their young, which might be why they enjoy their own company so much.

To determine a bear’s age, look at its teeth – under a microscope, their teeth’s roots have rings like stumps of trees. This is fitting, considering bears’ rooted relationship with trees. With a ready supply of bark or other edible plants, bears use them as a great source of veggies. Pandas and polar bears, both picky eaters, don’t follow this diet; pandas exclusively feed on bamboo, while polar bears will only eat meat.

Surprisingly, this means bears don’t usually consider humans when picking their meals. A Canadian man experienced this firsthand during a bear attack in 2008. With no way out, he played dead – and after gnawing on his head for a bit, the bear got bored and left him alive. But keep in mind that bears have been known

to eat almost anything, including snowmobile seats, engine oil, and rubber boots.

Unlike most mammals, bears can see in color. But there is more to these fluffy creatures than meets the eye. Bears are smart, being known to roll rocks into traps to safely get to the bait inside, and walk by putting their feet flat on the ground like humans, instead of on their toes like dogs, horses, and elephants. This unique way of walking lets bears walk short distances on their hind legs, leading some Native Americans to call them “the beast that walks like a man.”

Yet Bears have shown even more human-like characteristics than their walk. Local Bears have been known to excel in varsity level sports and competitive academics, repeatedly defeating teams in areas such as volleyball,



Well-rounded mascots Bears proudly represent Russia, wildfire prevention, BCS, and various sports teams.

soccer, and basketball, and astounding observers with their comprehension of math, essay writing, and the sciences.

Keep an eye out for these Bears in your local paper – they’re sure to make the headlines.

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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Lighting the Darkness: Camille Sunshine

Breaks are vital for relaxing with families

As the school year plods on, sometimes a break is the only thing that keeps us going. Don’t get me wrong – there are a lot of things I love about school, such as learning about world history and old English literature, being with friends, and being mentored by teachers. Still, the first semester has everyone looking forward to fall break, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The second semester has spring break and the student holiday around Presidents’ Day.

Ideally, these would be times of relaxation and recuperation from the chaos of school. More importantly, holidays are supposed to be spent having quality time with family members.

For Thanksgiving break last year, many of my friends had five or six projects that were due either right when we got back or within that week. Some of these projects had been assigned long ago, but others were assigned the week before break. When we came back, we should have been refreshed after getting lots of sleep and spending a lot of time with family. Instead, many sophomores said they were holed up in their rooms for the majority of their break doing homework.

“I had at least seven projects over the break, so much that I was actually planning on eating Thanksgiving dinner in my room because I couldn’t afford to stop working,” one student said. “People kept going on about how amazing it was to have a full week for Thanksgiving

break, but with so many projects I only ended up with a day or two to actually spend with family.”

I don’t think it is a good idea to give students a lot of homework over breaks. The concept of a break is to rest and relax, catch up on sleep, etc., so that you are refreshed and can attack school with renewed vigor. If you have too much homework to rest over a break, what was the break for?

Even God, who needs no rest, rested on the seventh day. As His followers, we are called to keep Sabbath. I’m not saying that it has to be on Saturday and you have to make sure you only walk a certain amount of feet on that day, like the Pharisees in ancient Israel. What I am saying is that we, as humans, need rest. What if we took one day, or even one evening a week, and spent it relaxing? If we ignored our work for a few minutes and truly let ourselves relax?

A few months ago, my family started to celebrate Sabbath. From roughly 6 p.m. on Saturday to 6 p.m. on Sunday, we don’t really do much work. Food still has to be made and that sort of thing, but otherwise, we relax. I’ve found that it has really helped my work ethic. I know that I can push through the crazy workload because a break is coming.

However, a lot of people are much busier than I am. You might say that you don’t have a whole day to take off. What if, instead, you just took an afternoon off? Every Friday afternoon

for instance, take a break from your homework. Not that you need to encourage your feelings of laziness; I’m just saying don’t encourage your workaholic feelings either.

Also, breaks are vital to family relationships. We’re all going to be gone from here sooner or later at some college, possibly far far away, and we’ll see our families less. While we are still at home, our lives and holidays should not be constantly filled with schoolwork. We need to cherish these last few years of childhood we have. I know I’m just a sophomore, but I’m already feeling the proximity of the impending separation from my family. Holidays are designed for time spent with family, which will not happen if you are in your room studying the whole time.

I understand that homework is a very useful tool to learning. I personally prefer working through something rather than listening to someone talk. There is nothing wrong with homework in general. The problem is when there is so much homework that rest and family time are lost.

This is my challenge to you: Teachers, don’t assign homework over breaks. Let students have the time off, and take some time to relax yourselves. Students, try to spend as much of your break as possible relaxing. Get the healthy amount of sleep. Spend time with your family. Take walks. Whatever it is that lets the stress roll off your shoulders, do it.

Velasco wins gold at swim

By Kira Juranek

BCS freshman Hannah Velasco won first place in state for the 100-yard breaststroke, competing at the TAPPS state swim meet on Feb. 13 in San Antonio. Velasco competed in two events at the Josh Davis Pool, winning the breaststroke with a time of 1:07.67, and taking second place in the butterfly with a time of 59.61.

Before advancing to state, Velasco competed in a regional competition on Jan. 28 in the same two events. She won first in both and was named the female Swimmer of the Meet for her central region division.

“She has a passion for the sport, and we look forward to seeing what she can accomplish in the next three years,” BCS athletic director Brian Thrift said.

Velasco started swimming at age seven, when one of her friends started it as an activity during the summer. Her friend eventually quit, but she continued with swimming and started to swim year-round at the age of 10. She practices every Monday through Saturday from 6-7:30 p.m. with her coach and teammates, and she trains at the gym a few times a week to strengthen her swimming skills.

Velasco said her family has always been supportive of her, while she keeps her eyes on new goals, like breaking records in TAPPS competition. Like many dedicated swimmers, she also hopes to earn a college scholarship for swimming, and even one day to go to the Olympics.

Meanwhile, Thrift said he hopes that Velasco’s success can “build some momentum” that might help BCS eventually add another sport for elementary and middle school swimmers.



photo: submitted

Champion Freshman Hannah Velasco was her regional’s Swimmer of the Meet before winning gold at state on Feb. 13.

Wait is over; seniors touring Italy

continued from page 1

ed walking tour of the area around the Leaning Tower, including entry into the Cathedral and Baptistery. After this, everyone will gather in Florence for dinner. Seniors spending the day in Florence expressed excitement at the opportunity to shop at Italian vendors and stores.

“I am really looking forward to shopping in Florence,” Madalyn Garelick said last week.

The sixth day of the trip will have the group depart from their hotel and



transfer to Assisi, where there will be free time for lunch and a visit to St. Francis’s Basilica. In the afternoon they will continue on to Rome, where they will be checked into their hotel for dinner.

On the seventh day of the trip, the group will partake in Vatican and Rome sightseeing. This tour includes a trip through Vatican museums and a stop at the Sistine Chapel. The excursion ends in a visit to St.



Peter’s Basilica. In the afternoon they will head to the Colosseum for a guided visit followed by a walk through the Roman Forum. They later will have the opportunity to take a self-guided tour from the Spanish Steps to the Piazza Navona

through the Pantheon. While the Trevi Fountain is another popular tourist attraction in this area, it is currently under construction.

Day eight includes free time in Rome, before the group begins the journey home the next day.

Social media sites attract attention of world, BCS

By Emily Shields

It’s time for lunch at BCS, and students are looking down at devices in their hands, hoping that someone liked that selfie they just put on Instagram, or favorited what they tweeted last night on Twitter. The room is filled with laughter, possibly from a funny joke someone made, but more likely from a humorous post on a social media site like Twitter or Instagram.

Social media has taken the world by storm, and Brentwood Christian is no exception.

Dozens of Brentwood’s secondary students are found with phones in hand during lunch texting, tweeting, instagramming, pinning, and posting on various sites of social media. Many are so enamored that they forget everything around them until it is time to end the social fun. It is clear that BCS students are caught up in the social media current.

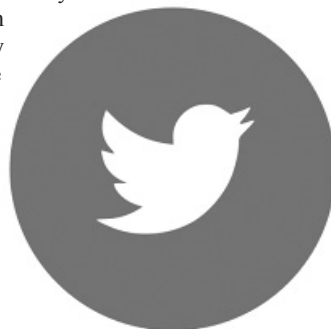
Even the teachers are in on the fun. English teacher Ashley Dargai says she checks her social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest accounts about 10 times a day. On the other hand, history and Bible teacher Mel Witcher has not been on his Facebook in months.

“I think my time is best spent face-to-face,” Witcher says.

However, teachers and experts do seem to agree that a cautious approach is best when it comes to checking social media daily.

Social media can vary from places of self-

expression, such as Pinterest, to places containing obsessive galleries of selfies, like Instagram, with much in between the two. According to marketingland.com, some of the most popular sites among teenagers in spring 2014 were Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Tumblr.



However, in the fall of that same year, Facebook’s percentage of teens dropped a whopping 27 percent within six months, which marketingland.com says is credited to the surge of parents joining the same social media site. This could mean that teens are striving to have a place to express themselves without

their mothers and fathers peering over their shoulders.

Throughout those same six months, Instagram maintained its position as the most popular social site with teens, gaining seven percent among that group.

Some social media can be very confusing to a person who is not well-versed in the ways of Internet interaction, so here are some explanations of what functions the most popular social sites have.

Facebook, established in February 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, is a website used to communicate with people you have allowed to see your posts, also known as “friends.” You can post anything from a cute picture of your dog to a mean message for your ex-friend on your “wall.” Of course, parents have joined the fun, causing teens and tweens alike to flee their

see **Social**, page 8

Honduras trip canceled

By Elijah Cunningham

Brentwood Christian has canceled this summer’s mission trip to Honduras due to lack of participating students. Trip sponsor Michele Broadway said the decision was made in January when the number of students interested went down from a starting number of 30, to four.

“Some years different things happen,” Broadway said.

Broadway attributed the drop in interest to several factors, including both the cost for the students to take the trip and the dangers of travelling to Honduras. Currently, Honduras has high crime and violence rates which may have caused parents to prohibit their children from going.

Broadway said Brentwood will resume the trip next year and will use the money from the ongoing Honduras jeans days to help bring the cost down so that more students may go. The trip is costly for the students, and this is sometimes the deciding factor for how many students may go.

“I am very optimistic about next year,” said freshman Grace Rogge, who had signed up for this year’s trip.

There is also a possibility of planning a trip to somewhere other than Honduras, Broadway said. She said BCS will be looking forward to next year and what things it may hold.

Students still signed up for the trip when it was cancelled were disappointed, but they understood why. Freshman Avery Miller expressed disappointment, but also said it was not for the worst.

“I kind of felt relieved when it was canceled, because there was only four girls going,” she said.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Kaylie Angello

Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2015.

Amiable actress provides encouragement, cupcakes

By Nicholas Bergeron

If you talk to people who know Kaylie Angello, you'll hear about her skills as a singer and actor. But more than that, they'll remark on how calm, kind, hard-working, and responsible she is.

"She's probably one of the nicest people I've ever met," says choir and Encore director John McMeen, who praises Kaylie for her determination and willingness to ask questions.

"She's always ready to lend a helping hand," sophomore Camille Sunshine says, "and when there's work to be done, she jumps right in."

Indeed, Kaylie has brought home-baked cupcakes every time a senior girl has celebrated a birthday this year.

"With Kaylie it's never about the big things, but always the small things that make the difference," senior Abbie Baros says, remembering a goofy instance of Kaylie playing with magnifying glasses to make her eyes look big. "The best memories are the ones w h e n

we're laughing, which is all the time."

Though she's now best known for acting and singing, Kaylie was a basketball player from fifth grade to her sophomore year.

"It was a lot of fun," Angello says. "I do miss it a lot. Having a team like that is like having another family."

However, she had to give up the sport due to time constraints when she joined Encore. She wanted to be a part of the singing group since hearing them in all-school chapel as an elementary student, and she auditioned every year of high school until she made it in her junior year.

"It's made me a lot more confident as a singer and as a person," Angello says.

Kaylie's career in the BCS theater department began in eighth-grade drama class, and since then she's earned two all-star cast awards at TCSIT, all-star cast at TAPPS district, and TAPPS state Best Actress. But it didn't start as impressively as it ended. Indeed, Kaylie almost dropped the class due to her stage fright, but over the course of time she realized her love for acting. After that, she "started out small," taking minor roles in plays and, with the help of theater director Cindy Singleton, grew in confidence and competence.

Her "turning point" came during Brentwood's production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, in which she played Edith Frank, Anne's mother. This role required her to come out of her shell more than ever before, because there is a powerful scene toward the end of the play in which Edith gets very angry, much unlike Kaylie's gentle, kind nature.

Singleton praises Kaylie for her "subtle,"

"honest," "delicate" performances.

"She brings (her performances) from inside, (and) relates emotionally to her characters," Singleton says.

A judge commented on the subtle, cinematic quality of the detail in Kaylie's acting shown in her role of M'Lynn from *Steel Magnolias*, for which she won Best Actress.

Kaylie describes the production as "very fun"; the cast was very close and had great chemistry. The Best Actress recognition, she says, is "all because of Mrs. Singleton."

"She's very committed to her roles, very determined," castmate and junior Natalie Williams says.

A BCS student since pre-K, Kaylie feels that her experience at the school is a lot more than simply getting a diploma.

"I feel like the friendships I made here will last beyond the walls of the school."

She appreciated the intimacy allowed by a smaller student body and the ability to know everyone in such a tight community. Teachers, she notes, are genuinely interested not only in students academically but also as individuals.

For college, Kaylie plans to study sports medicine at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene in order to become a physical therapist. Herself a recipient of physical therapy in childhood, Kaylie is drawn to the career for its helpful nature and its mobility.

Kaylie hopes to continue acting in college and beyond, in community theater. But regardless of what roles she may play, Brentwood friends know she will impress those around her with her performances as well as by her character.

Faculty comes back to defeat student body in flag football match

By Mary Womack

On a frigid February day, students of all ages converged beside the football field to behold a match of athleticism versus experience, huddled together in the bleachers, with anticipation in the air.

A group of fashion-challenged but tough teachers and coaches beat out scantily clad students 21-14 in a faculty student football game on Feb. 26. A 14-0 lead was held at the half by the sizable group of students, but a modest yet resilient group of faculty pulled out a thrilling win.

The game was much anticipated and originally announced in all-school chapel a week earlier by BCS chief operating officer Jay Burcham, but it was postponed for two days due to bad weather. In the days before the game, quite a bit of challenges, dares, and friendly trash-talking ensued.

The students dominated the first half. Senior Aaron Garcia had an early interception, and senior quarterback Zach Marsh connected on touchdown passes to freshman Dillon Smith and senior Cody Hunt, giving the young legs a 14-0 lead at the half.

At the beginning of the second half, CrossFit coach Ryan Christian threw a touchdown pass to flag football coach David Trevino. The faculty team benefited from big plays by Trevino and fellow football coach Ryan Rivera, and soon tied the score on a touchdown catch by coach Devan Loftis.

With five minutes left in the game, Loftis came up with another big catch at about the one yard line. Teacher Jonathan Weed then made a short touchdown catch to give the faculty their first lead.

On the students' final drive, teacher Jimmie Harper intercepted the ball with less than a minute left, clinching the game for the faculty.

"I was ecstatic (and) overjoyed. It felt good to rub it in their face – in a Christian way, of course," chuckled choir director John McMeen.

Loftis agreed that it felt "really good" to win.

"I thought we would win, but I had my doubts once the game started," he said.

Rather than four quarters, the game was divided into two 20-minute halves. Referees were Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth and her son, junior John Hollingsworth. Rules included three completions for a first down, no rush by the defense, and a five-second throw clock for quarterbacks.



Football fun Senior Aaron Garcia looks to avoid coach Devan Loftis after intercepting a pass early in the faculty-student game on Feb. 26. Junior Jake Dillard sets up for a block while junior Diego Batlle simply rejoices. photo: Dorothy Walters

THE BEAR FACTS MARCH 2015

TEACHER FEATURE: Summer Best

BCS grad, veteran teacher at home with fourth grade

By Kaitlyn Baird

She was BCS valedictorian, StuCo president, member of Encore, and a varsity player on the basketball and volleyball courts. Today some say she is one of the best teachers at Brentwood. In fact, most people simply call her Mrs. Best.

Most people would agree with Cindy Nestor that fourth-grade teacher Summer Best is a wonderful teacher.

"Summer Best is the best teacher ever," says Nestor, Best's colleague from across the hall. "I love having her as my fourth-grade teaching partner! She certainly has a sunny personality."

Best says she loves keeping her students engaged, so you'll often see her laughing or being silly in class.

Third-grade teacher Carolyn B'Smith also admires how helpful she is.

"She's so willing to always help and do what she can to help anyone," says B'Smith. "She uses her skills and abilities to help others."

Best began her journey at BCS as a sixth grader in 1990 when her family, the Fowlers, moved to Austin. Her father Jerry began teaching Bible, and her three brothers also joined her at Brentwood. After she graduated in 1997, Best majored in elementary education at Abilene Christian University. She met her husband Clint Best during Welcome Week at ACU, and the two got married in 1999. They moved to Austin shortly after the birth of their first son, current eighth-grader Micah Best, and Mrs. Best decided she wanted to come back to BCS as a teacher.

"I knew the heart of the school," she says. "I knew it would be a place where my kids would

be loved, and I could make a difference in the lives of other kids."

Best had three more sons soon afterward: seventh-grader Coby, fifth-grader Cason, and third-grader Bryson.

Best taught Pre-K at the school for eight years, then switched over to elementary computer for two years. But she felt like she was missing something. She craved a deeper relationship with each individual student that

wasn't possible when teaching more than 300 computer students.

When a spot for a fourth-grade teacher opened up this year, Best was excited for the opportunity to fill that role. In her opinion, fourth grade is the perfect age.

"They're old enough to do things for themselves, but they still love their teacher," she says.

The fourth graders get to participate in a variety of special activities including a histori-

cal play and a Nutcracker ballet. Best says her students are currently learning about ocean and sea animals, and they will finish off their study with a field trip to SeaWorld. The fourth graders also have *Historical Hysteria* to look forward to, which is a play they perform on Grandparents' Day.

Best says Nestor has been a great help to her during her first year in her new role.

"Not only has she been so helpful with the everyday school-related tasks, but she has also become a dear friend," Best says.

Best and Nestor implemented a new reward system for fourth graders this year. The students can earn and save stickers each week, and later cash them in for prizes. Two of Best's students saved their stickers all year and recently cashed them in for a lunch date with her at Culver's.

Best has wanted to be a teacher ever since she was a young girl. Not only did her father teach for several years, but her mother, Pam, has been a very active teacher in church, so teaching was in her blood. When she was growing up, Best would play "school" with her brothers. She would make them sit at a table and "boss them around." She even taught her youngest brother to read and do multiplication and division before he started school. Today the family tradition is carried on with her four sons currently attending Brentwood.

When she has free time, which Best claims "there is no such thing," she enjoys scrapbooking, riding bikes, reading, and going camping with her family.

So whenever you need help or want a good laugh, go see Mrs. Best. She is "the best," after all.



photo: Summer Best

Smile! Fourth-grade teacher Summer Best enjoys time with students Nathan Esche (left) and Evan Gruis (right), who saved up tickets to go on a lunch date at Culver's.

Jog-a-fun delayed; will feature obstacle course, first-ever 3K run

By Thomas Yates

This year's Jog-a-fun, having been rescheduled for April 8, will feature an obstacle course, a 3K run for middle school, and of course, the traditional snow cones.

Through March 10, a total of \$83,000 has been pledged. According to jog coordinator Dr. Kevin Claypool, the school is hoping to top last year's total of \$141,000.

On Feb. 25, the administration made a decision to postpone Jog-a-fun from its scheduled date of March 3 due to impending rain.

"We're running on April 8th, rain or shine!" executive assistant to the president Penny Hagen said.

According to development assistant Sarah Wilson, Brentwood is short on parent volunteers, and they are working feverishly on

a solution. They still need lap counters for the younger grades, supplies for the reward parties for elementary, snow cone makers, bib distributors, and spotters for the 3K and 5K.

Brentwood does, however, have its usual supporting companies, including CrossFit Texas, All Sports Timing, and DJ Ryan Guthrie from Altar Ed.

The new attraction this year is the obstacle course, which has been rented and will be spread out across the 3K/5K course. Jog officials stress that this is only for secondary students who sign a waiver.

The most notable change this year is the 3K for middle school students. Wilson said this was added in an effort to bring more fun to the middle school experience. She also said jog officials this year will more accurately measure out the tracks to ensure distances are right.

Incentives for raising money have been changed this year. For a minimum of 20 sponsor letters sent and \$150 raised, students will get a Jog-a-fun T-shirt. Those who run the required distances and times for the Jog earn a snow cone.

There are also major prizes for enthusiastic classes that raise the most money, and for these, Claypool says they are bringing out "the whole shebang." For the K4-fifth grades, the winning class will enjoy a week of daily rewards such as Crazy Hat Monday and Wacky Hair Wednesday. For third through fifth grades, those who meet the requirements can assist in throwing colors at the joggers of the 5K color run.

Finally, for high school, if 90 percent of the students meet the basic requirements, they will have a week of jeans and T-shirts. In addition

to the high school rewards, if 90 percent of the high school students raise \$150, Claypool said he will get a buzz cut.

There are also awards for individuals as well. Students who meet the basic requirements will have their names entered in a drawing. One name will be drawn from among grades K-2, and this student will win a limo ride with elementary principal Mara Ashley, which includes lunch at GattiLand Pizza.

A student from grades 3-5 will get a trip for a family of four to go horseback trail riding and have a barbecue lunch. In middle school, the winner will get a trip for a family of four to have a zip lining adventure at Cypress Valley Canopy Tours. Finally, a lucky high school student will receive a Mac Book Air.

Varsity boys meet unlucky end

Hunt scores 39; Bears lose on half-court shot

By Joshua Sass

After finishing second in district, the varsity boys' season ended on a final-second buzzer-beating half-court bank shot in the first round of playoffs on Feb. 21.

Despite battling significant injury problems before and during the game, Brentwood pushed through and nearly won, even though they only had six varsity players. But they lost the bi-district game 67-65 against Katy Faith West Academy.

The Bears held a steady lead throughout the first half and led at halftime, 32-27. But the Eagles then caught up quickly and took a five-point lead in the third quarter, which they held until late in the fourth, when Brentwood senior Cody Hunt took the game into his own hands. Shooting from the outside and driving to the basket, Hunt ended up with 39 points.

Trailing by one point with the chance for a final shot to win, Hunt was fouled and earned two free throws with only two seconds left. He made both shots, and fans leapt with excitement thinking comeback victory was secure. But disaster struck as the Eagles' guard made a running shot from behind half court as time expired. The eerie silence among Brentwood fans and the dejection of the Bear players created a solemn picture while the lucky visitors cheered, so ending the Bears' playoffs.

Junior Robert Lesko led Brentwood with 14 rebounds.

"We're a family, and I'll always remember the highs,

the lows, and how hard we pushed through together," Hunt said.

Brentwood coach Brian Thrift called the loss his toughest in his four years at Brentwood. But along with the disappointment came pride.

"I have never been more proud of a team like I am with this group of young men," he said. "All year long they faced adversity, but not one player ever used it as an excuse for failure. Every player stepped up at some point in this game.

"Charlie Sinclair played on a badly sprained ankle and you never would have known it. Robert Lesko was playing with a broken nose; Diego Battle was out with a broken wrist. We played that game with six full-time varsity

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photo: Mark Merkord

Too quick Senior Cody Hunt head for the basket in a game last fall. Hunt scored 39 in the Bears' playoff loss.

Lady Bears fall short of state

Girls fall to tough opponent in second round

By Joshua Sass

The Lady Bears fought hard and rallied at the end but couldn't come back in a 45-32 loss against Houston Lutheran North that ended their season on Feb. 27.

Despite a rough offensive start, scoring only six points in the first quarter, the Lady Bears played strong defense and kept it close in the first half. But things started to fall apart at the beginning of the second half. Defensive struggles arose, and a stagnant offense – scoring only two points in the third – led to a 20-point deficit.

The Lady Bears rallied in the fourth to bring it within nine, but by then it was too little too late. Brentwood's season would end in the second round of TAPPS 3A playoffs at a neutral site in San Antonio.

Junior Keely Hardin led with 12 points and three steals. Senior Nicole Glenn led with nine rebounds.

For the seniors it was a frustrating defeat. Having gone to the Final Four their past three years, this would be their first time coming up short. They finished 27-9 overall and second in district with a 10-2 record.

Head coach Devan Loftis said that this year's 3A division was considered the deepest and most competitive out of all the divisions, and that the girls should have no regrets in coming up short.

"I got more compliments about the heart they showed at the end of the losing effort than I have on most playoff victories," Loftis said.

Before their final playoff game the Lady Bears scrimmaged Regents, winning 56-31 against their non-district opponent.

In the first round of playoffs Brentwood dominated Logos Prep 72-32 on Feb. 21. They started off fast and never let up, turning on cruise control after taking a strong lead early.

Hardin led scoring with 19 points; Glenn had nine rebounds.

While they came up short on winning a state title and a fourth straight trip to the Final Four, Loftis said the girls "really get the big picture of what we are trying to do."

"They know how to honor God in the way they compete, ... and are recognized across the state as team with high character," he said.

After the loss, seniors expressed pride in their team's attitude and accomplishments, as well as gratitude for their opportunity to play for Loftis at Brentwood.

"I couldn't have been more proud of this team," Glenn said.

Senior Christina Onabajo summed it up: "I am honored to have been able to call myself a Lady Bear."



photo: Mark Merkord

Schooled Senior Nicole Glenn, Brentwood's all-time leading scorer, drives to the basket in the Bears' playoff loss.

Soccer girls overcome adversity, reach playoffs, impress coach

By Joshua Sass

The Lady Bears soccer season ended with an offensive battle in harsh conditions against a first seed from an opposing district in the first round of playoffs. Brentwood lost 8-4 against McKinney Christian Academy at their home field in McKinney on Feb. 17.

The Mustangs came out swinging and the Lady Bears were caught off guard by their quick attack, leading to a 2-0 deficit within the first six minutes. Later in the first half junior

Rebekah Legband scored on a penalty kick, but the Mustangs still led 4-1 at halftime.

Despite the cold and windy conditions the Lady Bears battled back in the second half to within one goal at 4-3, with goals by junior Hailey Miller and freshman Rebekah Connor. While Brentwood seemingly had the momentum on their side, they could not convert offensively. Meanwhile McKinney scored three unanswered goals.

Eventually the teams would trade one more goal, bring Connor up to two goals for the game.

Coach Cash Miller said his Bears finished strong, but they could not defensively hold off the strong attacking line of McKinney.

"We played hard, never quit, and played and lost as a team," Miller said.

The Bears finished fourth in district with a record of 4-6.

Despite numerous struggles throughout the year with injuries and losing players, the Lady Bears continued persevering.

"This team never quit. We played hard regardless if we were winning or getting

trounced," Miller said. "Not once did the girls have any meltdowns with one another on the field or off. It was a true team effort to play as well as we could every day."

Miller, known to his players as "Coach Cash," is the third coach in the past four years for the Lady Bears, who had to learn an entirely new system of play this year.

"I am proud of these girls for all the hard work they put in, the injuries they overcame and played through, and the faith they put in one another," Miller said.

Softball team just wants to play; rainfall still won't go away

By Grace Rogge

The Lady Bears softball team has had a slow start, as rain has washed away most of their non-district games as well as their opening district game against Central Texas Christian on Tuesday, March 10.

"The rain has been an obstacle," head coach Paul Sladek said after the latest rainout, "but I'm optimistic about the rest of the season."

After losing a scrimmage against Gateway Prep on Feb. 2, the Lady Bears waited an entire month before playing their second game, again against Gateway. However, it was worth the wait. The Lady Bears won their first official game 18-3.

The Lady Bears run-ruled their opponent,

led by junior Madison French, who had two doubles and four RBIs. Junior Sam Woolverton added a triple and a total of five RBIs. Junior Sofia Torres pitched three innings allowing only one hit. The Bears greatly benefited from 14 walks allowed by Gateway's pitcher.

"I think we have all come really far as a team and improved more than any team I've played with at Brentwood," senior infielder Yara Qussad said.

During the month of February, Brentwood had seven games canceled due to weather and lack of players. But this has given them lots of practice time to work on essential skills. Daily practices have been geared toward fundamentals of the game and defense.

"The team is progressing really well," Sladek

said. "We've got a solid group of hard-working girls that are very coachable and have allowed us to progress even though we have lost so many games due to weather."

This year the Lady Bears have gained six new players, including freshmen Jordan Hitt, Kira Juranek, Grace Rogge, Emily Shields, and Madison Wells. Junior Haley Miller also joined the team as a third baseman.

The team suffered a major loss when sophomore Hillarie Carpenter, a first-team all-district player last year, tore her ACL during basketball season, meaning she will miss the entire softball season. Juranek suffered a minor concussion in practice, and junior Shelby Greer fractured her finger while bunting.

"The challenge our team faces is confidence

and believing they are good," Sladek said. "Our district is very competitive, and every team is talented. We have to have a tough mentality that we have to battle every game and compete with 100 percent effort no matter what the score."

The Lady Bears are hosting their annual BCS Softball Invitational this weekend, running from Thursday, March 12, to Saturday, March 14, at Hyde Park. Fifteen teams will be in attendance, making it the third largest tournament in Central Texas this year.

"I'm trying to show that softball is not only growing but it would be profitable if the school were to have a softball field on campus," Sladek said.

Football stars drop by at dinner

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rolled into the primary school budget. So the Kickoff Celebration will not be the last of the fundraising.

BCS parents Christa Copeland and Kristi Jackson served as co-chairs for last month's event. They were in charge of the set-up, decorations, and menu, and had the help of many parent volunteers.

Those who attended the party had an opportunity to purchase football shirts from the Booster Club. Hotdogs and hamburgers were provided, and there was a signed football from the 2005 UT National Champions auctioned off for \$7,000. The party was also attended by current and former Longhorn players Marquise Goodwin, Johnathan Gray, Charlie Tanner, and Jeremy Hills.

Goodwin was a part of the 2012 USA Olympic long jump team and has played receiver for two seasons with the Buffalo Bills. Gray has



Star power Dr. Mark Billante (left) stands with Olympian Marquise Goodwin.

one year left at Texas as a running back from Aldo, where he twice won ESPN's Mr. Football USA award and was Gatorade National Player of the Year.

Tanner started for four years as an offensive lineman and was a two-time All-Big 12 player. He attended BCS until leaving to play football at Anderson High in ninth grade. Hills played seven games at running back as a true freshman in 2008, but his career was virtually ended when he broke his leg. He said he believes strongly that it is good for kids to play football.

"It builds on- and off-the-field skills, and strong bonds," he said.

Meanwhile, the search for coaches continues, and athletic director Brian Thrift said this is going well.

"We have been amazed at the interest in coaches throughout the country who have expressed interest in coming to BCS," he said. "We have interviewed several strong candidates and hope to have some of the candidates come to campus very soon."

Baseball team yet to lose

By Tony Lee

The BCS baseball team has been on a winning streak, starting the season with four wins and no losses. But with lots of recent rain and a cancellation of Tuesday's game against CenTex Chargers Home School, the Bears have not been able to get as much practice as they would like.

"The weather is affecting our practice play with district just around the corner," senior Aaron Garcia said.

Brentwood will begin the district season and play their first home game after spring break, on March 24 against St. Josephs.

This year's team consists of 18 players including six seniors, three juniors, five sophomores, and four freshmen. Brian Thrift is the head coach, which means, according to senior Zach Marsh, "letting players know when they need to fix things." He says the Bears have a very good chance of making the playoffs for the third year in a row.

"Our goal is always to get better every day," Thrift said. "We would like to win another district championship."

Assistant coaches Rich Russo, Gary Marsh, and John McMeen also help the team in specific areas. McMeen is in his first year as pitching coach for the team, and he says he tries to help the players out as much as he can, just to give them more insight and advice from his playing days.

"Baseball is a great team game," McMeen said. "It brings kids together where friendships are made that last forever."

A lot of the players clearly share his love for the game.

"I keep playing baseball because one day this game for me will be over," Garcia said.

"So I'm just going to keep working hard and enjoy it while it lasts."

Many seniors, including Garcia, Cody Hunt, and Marsh, have stepped out to help lead the team.

"Zach Marsh is the leader in my opinion," McMeen said. "He has great respect from his teammates and always gets players involved in the game, whether it's from behind the plate or just an encouraging word during practice."

Marsh, who plays catcher when he's not pitching, says that he thinks the team's willingness to be on the same page and work together is a big key to their success.

"I think the most important trait of being a team player is being willing to help your team out," Marsh said. "If we need you to lay down a bunt, you need to do that even if it hurts your personal stats in order to benefit the team."

Following are the most recent game results:

2/20: @ San Marcos Baptist 16-0 W

Sophomore Garrison Ryberg allowed only one hit, and the Bears enjoyed an easy victory in their second game of the season, and their first in two weeks.

2/27: @ San Marcos Tourn. W W

Playing a round-robin tournament in poor weather, the Bears were able to play two games, having a third canceled. They began with an easy 16-1 victory over Cornerstone, benefiting from lots of walks and poor fielding by their opponent. BCS used several different pitchers.

In their second game, Brentwood defeated John Paul II 10-5. Sophomore Michael Hickl hit two triples, and the Bears held a 10-1 lead before their opponent made it closer. Ryberg pitched all five innings.



photo: Dorothy Walters

Gearin' up Posters at the football reception gave diners the opportunity to directly sponsor football equipment.

No Wei! Junior leaves to work on film project

By Rebecca Tilley

Yunxi Wei spent her last day at BCS celebrating her time at the school with love, prayers, and sweet treats from her friends and fellow juniors. She is now in Shenyang, China, to help as the script clerk and keep records of shots and scenes for a production crew that is working on a documentary for a national TV channel.

The star of the film will be Ma Qiang, a famous athlete specializing in paragliding, who hopes the film will publicize the sport more. Wei and the production team will be on the road for much of the year to shoot footage for the documentary, going to Beijing, Hangzhou, Linzhou, and possibly Haikou for the filming.

Wei said she found out about the opportunity online. She decided to do it because she is interested in flying and in Qiang, who won the 2014 Paragliding Accuracy World Cup and is also from Wei's hometown. She made the decision after discussing it with her family.

"Though I had never done anything related before, I would love to try something exciting and challenge myself," she wrote in an email this week.

Wei said she does not plan on enrolling in

any official courses for school during her time in China as she will be very busy working on the film project, but she will continue learning English independently in her free time to keep her skills sharp. The project is expected to last for a year before Wei returns to finish high school at BCS. She will be returning in January of 2016 before the spring semester starts, and graduating with the Class of 2017.

Wei was at Brentwood from August of 2013 until last month. She participated in choir, art, and Student Council, and qualified for AIME last year as a part of the Math Team. Many of her friends and classmates have expressed that they will miss her dearly while she is away, and that she has been a great blessing at Brentwood. Her peers showed their appreciation for her on her last day by bringing cookies to share and having a group prayer with Dr. Paul Robison to bless her and her time in China.

"I love Brentwood and I had a wonderful time there," she said. "I'll miss my friends, teachers, classes, and all the fun StuCo-run activities."

Teachers agree that Wei will be missed.

"She has a joyful personality," Robison said, "and seemed to have a great sensibility to others' needs and problems."



photo: Kaiten Graessle

Cream of the crop Yunxi Wei (left), shown with fellow junior Kai Harper, has left BCS to work on a film project in China.

Basketball

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players, and they all showed such heart."

But before the Bears could arrive at the first round of playoffs they first had to contend for second place in district against TSD in a tie-breaking game on Feb. 18. Heading into the fourth quarter, Brentwood was down by two. In a similar situation to their final game, Hunt was fouled with 1.1 seconds remaining and scored both free throws, tying the game. The Bears surged in overtime and came away with a 10-point victory, 61-51.

Hunt led scoring with 32 points.

"This team has shown so much heart and grit this season," Thrift said. "Anytime we had to overcome some adversity, the boys answered with incredible effort."

After winning district last year, Brentwood finished in second place this year with a 9-4 record (16-16 overall).

"Despite our win/loss record," Thrift said, "this is one of the best teams that Brentwood has had in a long time, in my opinion."

Although they lose four seniors, Thrift said he believes that the upcoming classes will have learned from the seniors' leadership and will be able to lead effectively next year.

Social media dangers highlight importance of responsibility

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walls in pursuit of other social outlets.

Instagram, created in October 2010, is an app on smartphones where you can post pictures of puppies, friends, celebrities, and of course, the proverbial selfie, onto your account profile. You can tag fellow users in a photo, or you can post a hideous picture of your best friend and tag her in it as blackmail. There are ways to make your profile private or public, just like so many of the social media sites nowadays, but there are far more public than private accounts on Instagram. It is currently the most popular with teens, and there are few parents on the social media site.

Twitter, established in March 2006, is both a website and an app for smartphones where you can express yourself within the maximum 140 characters. You are able to follow celebrities (and their cats), TV shows, and friends to your heart's content, and communicate with those people as well. Brentwood even has a Twitter (@BCSBears). But students know they'd



better watch what they tweet, because teachers and coaches can see what they're doing, whether students think so or not.

Spanish teacher Adam Brown finds Twitter extremely helpful.

"You can find a lot of people's opinions on Twitter," Brown says, "and a lot of shows and businesses have it."

Pinterest, founded in March 2010, is a place where you can put pictures that you find interesting (called "pinning") on a "board"—a place that is designated to a certain topic, whether it be humor, beautiful people, or a favorite show. This is one place where it doesn't matter how old you are, because Pinterest is said to be a place for everyone. There are more and more people flocking to this social media site, likely due to the freedom of expression it allows. It is an outlet for creativity, where artists can show off their best works, and others can be inspired by pins.

Although social media can be fun, it can also become an obsession. Dr. Karrie Lager, a child psychologist in Los Angeles, Calif., had much to say about social media in an article in *The Huffington Post* published in May 2014.

"In moderation, social media can be a great

way for teens to connect to others, to relate to their peers, and to express themselves," Dr. Lager says. "However, excessive Internet use can have serious negative consequences."

Dr. Lager was responding to a survey published by CASA Columbia that explored the relationship between teenagers, social media use, and drug abuse. This survey discovered that 70 percent of children from ages 12 to 17 spend time on social media every day. Those who are interacting via social media daily were shown to be five times more likely to smoke cigarettes, three times more likely to drink alcohol, and two times more inclined to do drugs like marijuana.

In the same *Huffington Post* article, Dr. Charles Sophy, a prominent Los Angeles-based psychiatrist, explained this by pointing out that teens "are impressionable, and adding social media to the already prevalent peer pressure only ramps that pressure up further."

Brentwood teachers recognize that social media can affect students negatively as well as positively.

"It's a real movement," Dargai says. "People get depressed because they compare their lives

to the projected lives of other people and feel like their own lives are not together—which is not true."

Teachers from different generations recognize that there is an upside to social media. Being involved in these can keep people posted on current events and help them connect with friends in other places. But it can also be very powerful, says Brown.

"I think that we as Christians and respectable citizens need to be able to use it responsibly," Brown says, "and not for bad purposes. Talking about someone badly, even if you don't mention their name, is when social media is being misused."

Witcher also believes that social media can be powerful and that it can start to control a person's life.

"Just as your job can become all-consuming," Witcher says, "so can social media. You can miss more things, important things, while on it."

Social media plays a huge part in many people's lives, but that can also lead to a dependence on phones and computers for friendship and humor—things they used to simply find in the people around them.

