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THE BEAR FACTS

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BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

OCTOBER 2024



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Jog-A-Fun Rebranded

By Anu Oguntade

Brentwood Christian School is ending its 40-year tradition of Jog-a-Fun and transitioning to a new campus-wide fundraiser this year: Running of the Bears.

The event is being coordinated by Director of Development Jennifer Smeltzer, who joined the BCS family last year in the same role occupied by Sarah Wilson.

“While Jog-a-Fun has been a time-honored tradition for 40 years, it didn’t have anything that connected to Brentwood,” Smeltzer said.

Smeltzer plans to accomplish her goals of making the event more engaging and enjoyable for students by making changes to various aspects of the event, from the name recognition all the way to prizes. The kick off pep rally on Oct. 1 was emblematic

of those goals.

The lower elementary up through second grade will continue to run laps on Running of the Bears day, but third through 12th grade will brave the course - which is adding some new surprises.

After the two-mile course, students will have the opportunity to enjoy an American Ninja Warrior-style obstacle course and eat Kona Ice.

The biggest goal of the event is to not only raise money for the school to contribute to areas of student and faculty needs, but to bring moments of fellowship and thankfulness for the Brentwood community.

“Events like this make me truly appreciate everything this school has to offer, and I’m so grateful to be a part of something so special,” said sophomore Carolina Aranda.

Though Running of the Bears is a fun-filled event, it still has a competitive atmosphere, with students competing not only to win the race but to win the prizes that come with it.

“I’m excited to get into shape and cheer on my friends after I win,” said senior Jenna Fleming.

The top individual prize for donating the most funds for elementary school is a Crocs charm, and for secondary grades, the prize will be a locker magnet.

For team goals, if a grade level accomplishes their

see **NEW**, page 5



New Look! Brentwood welcomes a new logo for the Running of the Bears fundraiser, allowing for more people from all around Austin to support Brentwood as it tackles a new school year.

BCS welcomes fresh staff

The 2024-25 school year brought a host of new faces to Brentwood Christian School. Last year brought a record number of new staff members, but this year has eclipsed that metric by a long-shot. Continue reading to learn more about each of BCS’ newest employees (and several hired mid-school year in 2023-24).

Justice Addae

Justice Addae was originally from Ghana, a country in West Africa, but was hired as a new middle school mathematics teacher at BCS over the summer.

Addae has an extensive knowledge of math, including a Bachelor’s of Mathematics and two Master’s degrees in Mathematical Engineering and Statistics.

Addae mentioned academic excellence, smaller class size and strong student-teacher relationships as reasons for why Brentwood has been an excellent new home thus far.

“I hope to be a positive influence and a mentor to students by guiding them in both academics and life morals, holding on to the school’s morals and values,” Addae said.

--Cam Cunningham

Greg Brinkley

Greg Brinkley is a new History, Bible and Speech teacher in middle school. Brinkley’s family has been in the BCS community for six years prior to his arrival on staff, with his daughter, Amayah, first becoming a student in 2018. He also began as a substitute teacher last November.

Before working at Brentwood, Brinkley worked for the state of California and the federal government for a combined 27 years, specializing in Social Security disability.

With a passion for music, sports and board games, Brinkley plans to use those outlets along with his unique experiences to be a mentor for his students. In addition to teaching, he has committed to helping with the PSIA academic competition this year and also assists with the faculty chapel signing group.

--Kenton Auberger

Amanda Daniel

Amanda Daniel is Brentwood Christian School’s new Accounts Receivable Specialist in the Finance Office as of June. Her responsibilities at BCS include: incoming payments,



Brinkley

billing student accounts, family portal assistance, and more.

Before coming to Brentwood Christian, she worked for her family business as an accountant. Daniel has two daughters that attend BCS. Her family attends Westside Church of Christ.

“I knew before becoming a mom that I wanted my kids to be in a Christ-based private school,” Daniel said. “Not only for academics, but to have Christ in their lives daily. I love that the faculty, staff, and administrators are there to help lead the kids in a Christ-like way.”

--Kenton Auberger

Alexandra Dunbar

This summer, BCS hired a new Spanish I and III teacher, Alexandra Dunbar. She was born here in Texas and has been teaching for 15 years in and around Austin.

After acquiring a degree from Trinity University in San Antonio, TX, she taught at Walnut Creek Elementary, Travis Heights Elementary, and Austin Jewish Academy, and now brings her expertise to BCS.

“I feel truly blessed to be able to teach here knowing that I have a unique opportunity to grow in my faith and love for God in a wonderful school community,” said Dunbar.

--Cam Cunningham

Ginifer Grumbo

Ginifer Grumbo was hired as High School Executive Assistant just before Christmas in 2023, and this year, she has added Student Council sponsor to her responsibilities.

see **EMPLOYEES**, page 3

Bible provides window into lingering decision

How do we choose to be joyful?

Arguments, anger, and altercations flood the social interactions that students partake in each day. Situations of the world demolish joy that can be found in

every circumstance.

This picture of division and pessimism leaves a tapestry of black jagged tears across the community that has been suffocated by anger. Negativity is a social norm inside of schools and group environments. Jesus takes away all lines of separation.

In Luke, it says, “First things first. Your business is life, not death. And life is urgent: Announce God’s kingdom!” (Lk. 9:60, MSG). Jesus is a figure of Joy and hope that radiates light to all the people of the earth. Jesus is with us always, He is life, He is Joy. When we choose Joy, we choose Jesus, and He raises the dead from their graves!

This is a time when discord is drawn across the world. Countries overflow with tension between conflicting opinions and political distrust. Doubt is sown into the ground, making any step taken towards peace impossible.

Every snide remark over opposing political sides, forces the rift between neighbors to pull further apart. When sarcastic jokes are made at the expense of others, the rift between neighbors pulls further apart.

Not only is this rift tearing away at differing nations, but simple conversations and friendships are being thrown through a cycle of confusion. This attitude of self-preservation, and fear, and hostility

to friends has been fueled by the Coronavirus pandemic. Church doors were slammed shut, closing off Jesus, who longs to be opened for anyone, any day, to talk to the broken, to talk to the ones struggling in faith.

As it says in Matthew, “Where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them” (Matt. 18:20). In the dark, where solitude breeds in hordes of serpents that slip through the mind’s defenses, God seems distant, even gone. And that isolation lingers in our community at Brentwood, and around the world where the struggle to be together lingers.

Laughter, Happiness, positivity, they speak life back into decrepit spirits tired of forging through heavy negativity. Solomon, the author of the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, writes two very different books in the Bible. Proverbs is written at the beginning of Solomon’s life, when he is full of energy and fire for God, wanting to follow His will and Word, while the book of Ecclesiastes is written when Solomon is old and experienced in trials, discussing the regrets of not living a life that would bring rewards into Heaven.

The Earthly treasures Solomon put his value into take different forms for each individual. These treasures could be the need for attention to feel secure, the unnecessary strive to always be right, political opinions, choosing money over relationships.

“There is a time for everything” (Ecc. 3:1), as Solomon phrases it. This demonstrates that God has gifted mankind with feelings to move through life in, and that there is a time for everybody to feel sadness and anger, guilt and depression. Staying in those feelings of negativity directly takes away the freedom that God has given us. God wants for us to move through sadness and merri-sadness, anguish and

contentment.

I urge the students and staff of Brentwood to move through emotions and experiences from day to day, hour to hour, class to class. Do not let the anxieties of one moment flow into another, colliding with others, spreading the infectious disease of stress and evil.

Solomon continued: “I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live”(Ecc. 3:12 NIV). No worldly disagreement or grudge is worth taking happiness away from a day. The moments when patience is tested by people and trials, those moments can turn into valuable relationships, or something that helps patience grow when there is none left inside of someone to give.

Psalms says, “You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand” (Ps. 16:11). The “Monday morning” point of view is easy to live with, to have as an excuse for sour behavior. Everyone has times of struggle. People choose to brood and be discouraged over the little times in life that test character and resolve.

In James, the author says, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance” (Jm. 1:2-3). Annoyance and impatience are a part of life. Temptation calls to the inner struggles of humanity and clashes with what God calls each person to do as a follower of Christ. Feelings cannot be pushed away or made into false happiness, but God calls for forgiveness of wrongs.

Neighbors are the people on the opposite side of electoral opinions, neighbors are the friends who grow distant after a few years of moving schools, neighbors are the individuals who test patience daily, neighbors are the people who you can’t stand who you sit next to in first period.

Psalms says: “I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand” (Ps. 40:1-2).

While there are times ahead that will challenge a positive attitude and deciding to forgive over and over, choice is the act of electing to be joyful when your coffee was spilled, and no one stooped down in the pit to help you in your darkness.

THE BEAR FACTS

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

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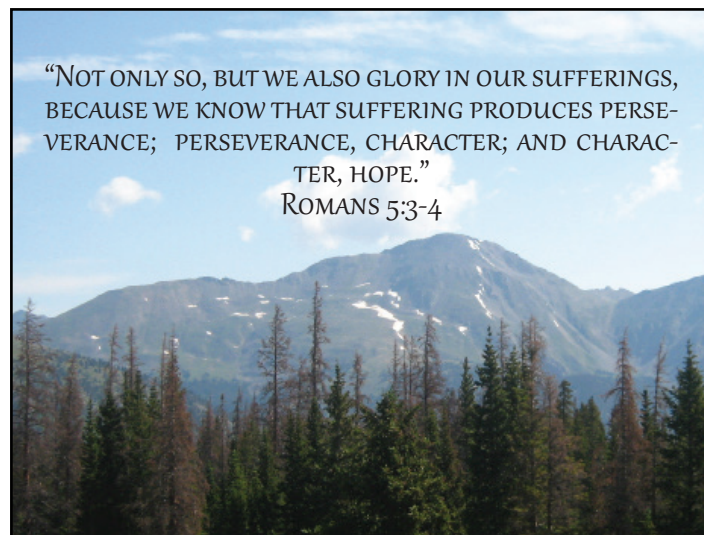
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Nature of God Gods creation of nature allows for joy to be physically seen , not just spoken of.

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Employees lift up learning

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A private school graduate herself (Round Rock Christian Academy), Grumbo was drawn to the familiar environment and has a strong opinion on the value of BCS' educational system. A fun fact: Grumbo owns over 500 books.

--Kenton Auberger

Jazzmyn Hollister

Jazzmyn Hollister was hired in August as Brentwood Christian's new Algebra 1 and 2 teacher. She spent part of last year as the school's math tutor and was thrilled to move to a full-time role.

"With tutoring, I was able to help [students] realize that they were capable of learning the material if they had proper direction and were willing to put in the effort to learn," she said. "I also learned the beauty of patience, gentleness, and peace as these students put faith in me and themselves."

Originally from San Antonio, Texas, Hollister attends Round Rock Church of Christ.

--Graham Auberger

Corey Jennings

Corey Jennings joined the staff in January 2024, taking over as the Theatre department lead. Graduating from the University of Texas at San Antonio, Jennings received his Bachelor's in Science with a concentration in Sports Medicine.

For this upcoming school year, Jennings' main goal is preparing his students to compete well in the TAPPS One Act Play competition and continue to share compelling and fun productions with the community while involving as many students as possible.

--Addison Everline

Lisa Kennedy

Lisa Kennedy was hired at the end of July to take the role of ninth grade Biology teacher



Hollister

as well as seventh grade Life Science. Previously, Kennedy worked at Macmillan Learning as a Chemistry Media Editor, but she decided to make a switch to Christian education to be closer to her kids, all four of whom attend BCS, and teach from a Christian worldview.

"I believe that science points us to God, and it is a wonderful blessing to be able to teach science in an environment where I can talk about that," said Kennedy.

--Anu Oguntade

Rachel Moorehead

Rachel Moorehead is one of the school's new EL-3 teacher aids. She attended Austin Community College for a short period after graduating early from high school before working in the fashion industry and traveling all throughout Asia.

She has lived in Texas her whole life and has been working in education as a volunteer and employee since she was a teen.

"I know how important it is to feel like there's someone who sees you for how God made you, and that with His will, you can do anything," Moorehead said. "I hope to bring this understanding to others in the relationships I make."

--Cam Cunningham

Rachael Owens

Rachael Owens became a new member of the BCS community in July as a middle school English Language Arts teacher. After teaching everything from three year olds with special needs to seniors in high school, Rachael Owens is ready for the new adventure. The bulk of her years have been teaching elementary; this is her 35th year in education.

"It is awesome to be able to share your faith so freely and to allow moments in the classroom to so easily transition into a moment of spiritual growth," she said.

She spent the last eight years at Yoakum ISD with her husband, Rick Owens, who is also new to Brentwood Christian this year.

--Ava Cavada

Rick Owens

Rick Owens became the new Middle School and defensive coordinator for the football team in July. His goal is to help students walk closer to God and help them improve.

"I look forward to building lasting relationships, walking closer to God, and helping the students of Brentwood to become the very best version of themselves in God's eyes," said Rick Owens.

He has been teaching for 35 years and got his Master's degree in Physical Education/History from the University of Houston. Before coming to Brentwood, he worked at Yoakum ISD for 8

years. He chose Brentwood because most of his immediate family, including his son and daughter, live in Austin.

--Alex Schehl

Kelli Platt

This August, BCS welcomed new Pre-K teacher Kelli Platt. Platt's main goal is to build strong relationships with all those she comes into contact with.

Prior to joining the Brentwood community, Platt was a stay-at-home mom and spent three years working in Pearland ISD. She came to Austin to be closer to family and decided she would work at BCS because of its nurturing Christian environment.

"One of the benefits is a common goal of exemplifying God's love in all that we do," said Platt.

--Ella Kennedy

Caleb Rektenwald

Caleb Rektenwald was hired in June as the new band director at Brentwood Christian School. Previously, he worked as a band and music teacher at Johnson City ISD. Rektenwald is from Abilene, Texas, and he and his wife, Emma Rektenwald, another new teacher at BCS, attend Westover Hills Church of Christ in Austin.

"I decided to come to Brentwood because of its commitment to excellence, success and the ability to teach freely with a Christian worldview," he said.

Some of his goals this year include taking the band to win state for the third year in a row and to form a sense of community in the band where students can grow together and make great music.

--Graham Auberger

Emma Rektenwald

Emma Rektenwald joined the BCS community over the summer as a new English teacher. She teaches freshman and sophomore English as well as Speech.

She earned a B.A. in Music and a B.A. in English at ACU, then went on to University of Texas to earn her M.A. in Media Studies this past spring. While at the University of Texas, she worked as an academic journal editor as an intern and then as a co-editor.

"After only a few weeks of school, I've been surprised by the depth of knowledge and nuanced perspectives students bring to conversations about Christian worldview," she said.

--Isabella Parra

Joe Rispoli

Joe Rispoli is Brentwood's new Director of Communications and Marketing, Rispoli has a



Kennedy

total of 24 years in Christian education and was excited about the opportunity to work at BCS. He has worked at a total of four private, Christian schools, but recently took a two-month hiatus before the BCS job opportunity came to be.

Rispoli has only been officially on campus since the start of the school year, but has observed that Brentwood is truly something special and that he is enjoying his time here.

"As a Christian, it's clear to me who shares a love for the Lord and for the students, and that kindred spirit makes it much easier to adapt to this new environment," Rispoli said.

--Karlee Lawrence

Vashuan Simmon

Vashuan Simmon was hired in August 2024 as an EL-4 teacher assistant. Before coming to BCS, she worked at Round Rock ISD. Simmon was seeking a change, and a current employee at Brentwood Christian had mentioned the EL-4 position.

One of Simmon's main goals for the school year is to glorify God through everything she does. She also aims to create positive exchanges with parents and guardians and the employees on campus.

--Graham Auberger

Paul Sladek

Coach Paul Sladek recently rejoined the BCS family as an elementary PE teacher and the head softball coach. Before returning to Brentwood, Sladek worked at Canyon Creek Elementary School as a coach to kids of all religions and cultures. He was Brentwood's softball coach for 12 years before departing for Round Rock ISD, and is thrilled to return to a place he knows.

Sladek is a 1996 alum of BCS, and the Christ-influenced atmosphere helps him to put Christ at the center of everything he does for the Bears.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: *Conor Schehl*

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

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Encouraging senior brings constant effort

By Ally Robertson

Known to be a reliable and strong leader in the senior class, Conor Schehl has stepped forward to bring his grade to greater heights. Not only is he involved in many sports and activities, including football, track and field, and NHS, he is also a complete role model for other students.

Schehl has been a Class Officer for all four years of high school, starting first as president before transferring to treasurer, showing off a flexibility and others-first mentality that sums up his character quite well.

His quiet and knowledgeable spirit has affected Brentwood throughout all his years at BCS. Attending Brentwood Christian since the sixth grade, he has been breaking records and fighting for every score since the very beginning.

Words that were continually repeated when talking about Schehl's character were: intelligent, caring, and hard-working in every task he sets his mind to. Senior Griffin Smith elaborates on Schehl's character, explaining: "Conor is very smart. He's naturally gifted and dedicated, and he's becoming a lot more vocal now as a leader on the Football team. I used to think of him as a quiet leader, but now I think of him as a total leader."

As a critical player as the running back and captain, his growth over the course of his academic and athletic career shows in the role he plays on the field and track. On the gridiron, he spurs his team into success with positivity and spirit. This year alone, Schehl has scored seven touchdowns, and in all four years of high school, a combined sum of nineteen in total, with many more to come.

"Conor is a great leader who leads by example. He is very smart and quiet and works his tail off," head football coach Kyle Maxfield says. "We all talk about how we treat others and no one

emulates that better than Conor. He will be very successful in life because he doesn't cut corners and realizes what it takes to be a winner on and off the field."

Incredibly smart, and talented particularly in mathematics, Schehl has excelled in classes, the first to raise his hand, and the last to boast. Math teacher Kaileen Graessle describes his character of always giving.

"In the classroom, Conor could be pride-ful, but he's not," she said. "He could be arrogant, but there's no hint of that. When he

others. He has been lending a helping hand, prepared to answer questions in class.

"I admire his authenticity, being able to be himself and not necessarily care about what others think of him," senior Afton Harlan said.

Schehl's time at Brentwood Christian has shown how much he has grown in confidence and knowledge.

When looking to the future, Schehl's ambitions from inside BCS stretch into his lifelong goals.

"My plans after high school are to go to college and get a Master's degree in electrical engineering," he said. "My ultimate goal is to improve or invent something life changing."

It is evident that Schehl's faith is factored into why classmates respect him. His love for Jesus is shown through the way that he treats teammates and gives them the benefit of the doubt in any situation. Caden Shockey, Schehl's best friend, immediately affirms that grace first-hand.

"I can see Jesus in everything he does," Shockey said. "In football games, Conor is always bringing it back to the Lord, saying that the only reason that we're here is because of Him, and that we play for Him."

As well as bringing Jesus into the lives of others, Schehl is able to incorporate verses into everyday conversations.

"Conor has really good Biblical knowledge; he's told me that he's read through the Bible a handful of times, and he knows a lot of verses that he can say off the top of his head," senior Hollis Harlan said. "He's really good about knowing who God is, and I do believe that he's a believer and a follower of Christ."

Ultimately, Schehl has impacted Brentwood Christian in setting an example for the younger classes to come, expanding the knowledge of teachers and staff, and raising the bar to challenge future leaders to influence BCS in the same way.



helps someone, he ever would say, 'Well this is easy,' unless he's trying to encourage them. He just is always humble, grateful, kind; all of those things." Additionally, Schehl is extremely giving in his time and willingness to help

Disc golf, livestream among Harper's skills

By Isabella Parra

Walking into Jimmie Harper's classroom, one feels the relaxing, coffee shop atmosphere as they settle into an enjoyable class with him. The unique trinkets that dust the shelves are artifacts of his life and time he has spent at Brentwood. Feel free to ask him about any of them during his Talk About It Tuesdays. You will be surprised.

With the chalkboard, hanging cafe lights in the back corner, or the shelves of books, it's hard to disagree with students who see his classroom as nostalgic and welcoming.

"His room is always inviting," said senior Maeryn McCormick. "It feels like home."

While it's disappointing that freshmen and sophomores can't enjoy the comforts of his room just yet (Harper teaches upperclassmen only), in the past he has taught students as young as fifth graders.

Harper started working at BCS a decade ago in 2014, and his long list of responsibilities include U.S. History, running the livestream of games, is the sponsor of the Disc Golf Club, and leads a mentor group. In addition, he coached middle school flag football and basketball for six years, was a class sponsor for five different school years, freshmen, sophomore, and junior Bible.

No wonder you see him everywhere on cam-

pus.

One of his previous mentor group members, another familiar teacher on campus, Coach Connor White, always appreciated Harper's ability to understand the will of the people.

"One of my favorite memories was one time we played Super Smash Bros in mentor groups," White said. "It was good bro time."

Senior Coleston Allen, who had Harper as one of his first BCS coaches, agreed.

"Coach Harper was an amazing coach," Allen said. "He taught me so much about being a man, and about football."

"One time he told us if we shoot one thousand free throws each, he [would] get us all ice cream. We all did [except for] one kid, so he didn't get it for us. [This lesson] taught us to keep each other accountable if we want to reach a goal."

Harper started live streaming BCS home athletic events in 2020 in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. He remembers being reluctant to MC for the games because he was stretched thin working as a teacher, coach, mentor, and sponsor. However, he is glad he did, and is incredibly grateful to Performance Director and Lady Bellas director Lisa Warner for being so organized with the Pep Rallies.

Students truly appreciate the work he does.

"Mr. Harper makes the pep rallies special because he sets the tone," McCormick said. "He has a commentating voice and makes it feel like we are in a game show and everything [becomes] more exciting than it actually is."

Another noticeable feature in Harper's classroom is the small whiteboard leaning against the large whiteboard that says, "Disc Golf Club" written in green Expo marker.

Harper started his personal disc golf career in 2021, and the Disc Golf Club began in 2022. The disc golf course was also put in the same year.

Adam Stow, Jeff Morris, and Jimmie Harper were the original co-founders of the club and some of the original members were Nathan Thom (President), Julian Jimenez (Vice-President), Jacob Klein-Bradham, Dakota Johnson, and Cole Ziegler.

"Seeing his enthusiasm about this sport was inspiring and we were blessed to have him as our club sponsor," said recent graduate Julian Jimenez, a member of the club.

Mr. Harper is also incredibly helpful in teaching new members.

"He is really supportive when you are not very good at [disc golf]," junior Lily Wright said.

But at the forefront, Harper is incredibly

passionate about his teaching.

"I would teach for free, they have to pay me to grade," Harper quipped.

Part of what makes Harper's class so interesting is that students can never expect when he may burst into song, or start a mini-monologue with himself, or a random song starts playing on the slides that he has so carefully crafted. Harper has many traditions about his class that make it stand out.

"A favorite part I remember from his class was trench day," White remarks. "He took us behind the football field and read us stories about WWI."

It is hard not to fall in love with history when it is taught by such a passionate and enthusiastic teacher.

Whether you hear Harper from the livestream, run into him at a disc golf course, or encounter him in the classroom, it is incredibly visible the amount of work he puts into the BCS community.

"Mr. Jimmie Harper [is] a firm but fair teacher who puts God above all in what he teaches," Jimenez said. "A Bible verse that fits Harper's character well is Psalms 37:30."

"[Harper] is a righteous man who inspires with his words and actions. I am thankful to have had him as a teacher."

New slogan, same race

continued from page 1

monetary goal, they will receive a donut party. Any grade that knocks out 100 percent class participation will receive an inflatable day on Nov. 15 (elementary) or an extended lunch on Nov. 22 (secondary).

"I'm super excited about the opportunity for extended lunch, and I hope everyone makes an effort to get sponsors," said sophomore Renee Groomes.

Running of the Bears is taking place on Nov. 13th, giving the BCS community plenty of time to get excited for the event and raise money.

While some have expressed discontent with the idea of the name change and rebrand, the opportunity for new traditions blending with old through the power of giving and service promise to provide opportunities for God to be glorified through our school.



Rowdy and Ready BCS celebrated the kick off of the new Running of the Bears fundraiser with a pep rally on Oct. 1.

Athletic website brings opportunities

By Karlee Lawrence

Whether it's livestreams, schedules, stats, rosters, or sports photos, in the past, these tools were spread out across Brentwood Christian School. Some were found on the website, others on a newsletter or two - even some in this newspaper - but never all in one place.

Enter BCSAthletics.com.

BCS launched a high school and middle school (BCSMSAthletics.com) athletic website over the summer, showcasing our athletes and Bear spirit more so than ever before. The school has partnered with Mascot Media, a company that exclusively works with athletic programs, to create the sites.

The website has exciting features like high quality action shots, articles about what's happening in BCS athletics, informational broadstreams from your favorite host, high school history and Bible teacher Jimmie Harper, schedules, rosters, forms, links, alerts and more.

The athletic website came to be as a long-term goal that was fulfilled this year.

Athletic director and head coach of the Lady Bears basketball team, Julie Walker, said she came to Brentwood with a plan of making our athletics program even better than before. She wanted to accomplish the goals of a website having top tier designs and amazing community outreach. Differentiating and distinguishing Brentwood from other private schools, highlighting why Brentwood is so special, was a must.

"Schools around here don't have nice athletic pages, so we wanted something that would set us apart," said Walker.

Not only does it exemplify a creative way of spotlighting athletic excellence and community outreach, but it also serves as a marketing tool for BCS. With the new website, not only can students, faculty, and staff see the happenings of athletics at Brentwood,

Football starts season with spirit

By Alex Schehl

The Brentwood Christian football team has started off the season strong. The team's main goal for the season is to make the postseason, and the opportunity to do so is still on the table.

With a record of 3-2 through five games (at time of publication), the team hopes to keep up the momentum - and learn from a pair of close

losses - taking everything one day at a time.

"The season is going well so far because we have learned to lock in and get the job done," said sophomore Joshua Howe.

Whether winning or losing, the team is always looking for ways to get better. After a win, the team celebrates for 24 hours then gets right back to work, often going to Shake Shack or Culver's to celebrate their victory before moving mentally to the next opponent.

The team opened the season with a tough 24-7 loss to Central Texas Christian School, but immediately bounced back with three straight wins over St. Dominic Savio, Legacy Prep and Manor New Tech on Homecoming.

In the team's first district game versus Grace Community School from Tyler, a back-and-forth contest, ended with a seven-point loss, 42-35. Still, the silver linings are there.

"Losses are disappointing, but we try to learn from them," said senior Conor Schehl.

With the entire team being diligent, dedicated, and determined, it's been easy for the coaching staff to see growth.

"It's hard for people not involved to

know how much time and sacrifice that goes into a high school football team, sacrificing their time in order to be the best they can be," said Kyle Maxfield, head coach and BCS athletic director.

With some big-time upperclassmen in the fold, the team has high hopes it can continue to compete and surprise in a new classification, up to TAPPS 5A from 4A the past two years.

Junior quarterback Brayden Jennings has 11 total touchdowns through five games, and junior Zach Czerlinsky (eight total touchdowns) leads a strong group of junior-heavy skill players which include Gabe Washington and Jack Hansen.

The team is also bolstered by some impressive two-way players in seniors Victor Koncaba, Jack Copeland, Nathan Czerlinsky and sophomore Cam Hudson on the line, Schehl and junior Esteban Gutierrez at running back and linebacker and junior Luke Weed, who has stepped up in a big way at defensive end and H-back.

Overall, the team is hoping to continue hit-



Ready for Anything The BCS football team, above, takes the field prior to the first district game against Grace Community School on Sept. 27.

ting its stride as the season continues and be ready for pivotal games against Hyde Park and Brook Hill School to close out the season.

On Friday, Oct. 11, the Brentwood football team faced off against Arlington Grace Prep (results not available at time of print) and looked to earn their first district victory of the year.

Bears Football

2024 2025

#0 Levi Baron	#24 Hudson Borders
#2 Brayden Jennings	#50 Noah Cabiya
#4 Griffin Smith	#51 Josh Howe
#6 Zach Czerlinsky	#53 Nathan Czerlinsky
#7 Aydrikk Esquivel	#54 AJ Koncaba
#9 Matthew Crouch	#60 Caden Shockey
#10 Levi Olewin	#63 Jack Copeland
#11 Luke Weed	#66 Cameron Hudson
#12 Liam McGaughy	#70 Samuel Moore
#14 Gabe Washington	#71 Nathan Moore
#15 Trey Campbell	#72 Victor Koncaba
#17 Esteban Gutierrez	#75 Will Kurtz
#18 Everett Merrell	#76 Elliott Koncaba
#20 Jack Hansen	#77 Lincoln Lange
#22 Conor Schehl	#88 Mason Foster

XC joins the race with determination

By Ella Kennedy

The Brentwood Christian School cross country program started off the season strong on both boys and girls sides, with talented runners, an experienced head coach, and wonderful attitudes.

Due to moving up a classification this season, going from TAPPS 4A to 5A, their main

goals are simple: to compete well and work hard.

"This will be more of a growing season for us as we train new runners, get into shape, and have to compete at a higher level with being in 5A," said head coach Katie Smith.

At the Savio Early Bird Invitational, the first meet of the season, Juniors Harper and Hailyn Counts placed first and third. Sophomore Lynden Worley also placed 17th. On the boys side, Junior Hollis Harlan placed sixth and junior Nico Napper placed 13th.

"We have one of the best runners in the state in Harper Counts," Smith said. "Hailyn Counts, Lynden Worley, and [senior] Afton Harlan as well are on the girls team.

Many on campus recognize the cross country athletes not just as runners, but a strong presence in general.

"They are just really good kids...they are good athletes, they are good runners, but they are also good friends and good leaders," said Smith.

Worley got 30th at the McNeil Invitational in her division on September 21st. Also, at this meet, Harper Counts got 48th in the "Gold" division, the top classification at the

meet. On the boys side, Hollis Harlan got 60th. All races were 5Ks. Thus far, both genders are pleased with their results.

"The team is so amazing and it's so fun to run with them," Hailyn Counts said.

This season, the team hopes to qualify as many runners as possible and place at state. The cross country teams depend on each other and are supportive of the people around them. They are not afraid to do challenging things, and do so together.

"We are all putting in the effort and getting stronger together," said Worley.

The team has great seniors and upperclassmen who are people of integrity and great leaders, even through difficult circumstances and challenging races.

"Even though it's not always the best to run, my teammates are always there," Afton Harlan said.

Beyond running and competing, the athletes have a different purpose in mind.

"Our motto [from last year] was to 'Run as One,' I think that means that we all run individually, but all running for one purpose, and that is for the glory of God and to build each other

up," said Worley.

The Bears and Lady Bears hosted their sixth annual BCS Invitational on Saturday, Oct. 5, and will host the TAPPS District 2-5A Meet at home on Saturday, Oct. 19. The TAPPS State Cross Country meet is scheduled for Monday, Oct. 28 at Cottonwood Creek Golf Course in Waco.



Running with Pride Junior Harper Counts, above, continues to impress; Counts won the BCS Invitational varsity girls division on Oct. 5.

Varsity Bears

2024 2025

BOYS:	GIRLS:
Gino Burke	Afton Harlan
Hollis Harlan	Alivia Villanueva
Jacob Klein-Bradham	Charis McGaughy
Jacob Martinez	Dandarah Xolani
Jake Johnson	Hailyn Counts
Nico Napper	Harper Counts
Pablo Novelo	Isabella Novelo
Xavier Parra	Lynden Worley
	Madison Clark
	Scarlet Harlan
	Sarah Echols

THE BEAR FACTS OCTOBER 2024

Varsity girls volleyball team continues to dominate

By Ava Cavada



AI C! E! The varsity volleyball team huddles up to pray and support each other before starting a game.

The Brentwood Christian School volleyball team continues to exceed all expectations. The varsity team includes ten players consisting of six seniors, two juniors, and two sophomores who not only have amazing athletic ability, but have Christ-like attitudes on and off the court.

The 2024 season has been going well so far; the girls have had a few losses but are overall dominating their opponents and slicing their way through district play. Despite moving up to TAPPS 5A this

season, and facing tougher competition, the team has fared well and continues to push for more.

"We expect them to do well in district and continue to perform at a high level to qualify for the state tournament," said head coach Paula Trejos. After defeating Brighter Horizons Academy on Friday, Oct. 4, the team's record on the season was 23-11.

The season has been an unforgettable one, with the diversity of grade levels on varsity and tough schedule creating some long-term memories for all.

"My favorite memory from this season so far was when we played Hill Country, who was undefeated, and we lost the first two sets but came back and beat them the next three to take the game," said sophomore Peyton Tucker. "It was a lot of hard work and dedication but we fought through it to win."

"I love how fun it is to be around all of the seniors and how they all have great leadership on the court," added sophomore Henley Magee.

The varsity had a busy tournament season with three jam-packed events, preparing the girls for the rigor of district competition. Thus far, the team has breezed through

district, defeating the likes of Hyde Park and new schools to the mix, Grace Community and Brook Hill, in straight sets. Trejos feels blessed to coach the squad. "They are a collection of talented, high-spirited, and successful young athletes striving to compete as one," she said.

As the girls continue moving forward this season with many games each week, they are continually building their stamina in preparation for the upcoming district tournament, which begins Tuesday, Oct. 22, and the playoffs.

According to our school's Maxpreps page through Oct. 4, junior Claire Montgomery has 296 kills throughout the team's successful season so far. Senior Rayen Flandes has 388 assists, and senior Abigail Kampman has 67 blocks.

Montgomery and Flandes, in particular, have set milestones recently with 1000 career kills and 2500 career assists, respectively. Flandes and Kampman are two of six seniors who have been part of the program over the last four years and have been part of over 130 wins, two state tournament appearances and three straight district titles.

Whether it be in a game or in practices after long days at school, the girls never fail to show off their amazing God-given talents.

The squad continues their push toward the end of the regular season on Tuesday, Oct. 15 at Incarnate Word Corpus Christi, followed by a rivalry showdown at Regents School of Austin on Friday, Oct. 18.

Six BCS students compete in Jr. Olympics

By Addison Everline and Grey Nyby

The Junior Olympics took place this year in Greensborough, North Carolina from July 27 to Aug. 3. Although far from Austin, Texas, Brentwood Christian School had several competitors across grade levels and genders that made the trek to compete at a national level.

BCS students Hendrix Eke (fourth grade), Scarlett Smeltzer (fifth grade), Noah Welsh (fifth grade), Zephaniah Botello (sixth grade), Ava Johnson (sophomore) and Joshua Gonzalez (junior) all took part in various events at the meet.

For the full story on this unique experience, check back in the December issue of The Bear Facts or visit BCSAthletics.com later this month.



Lady Bears Volleyball

2024  2025**VARSITY:**

#1 Peyton Tucker
#2 Elisha Burks
#4 Quinn Kirchoff
#5 Henley Magee
#6 Addison Everline
#7 Rayen Flandes
#8 Ariba Mohammed
#12 Claire Montgomery
#14 Asia Anderson
#15 Abigail Kampman

JUNIOR VARSITY:

#5 Noelle Shepard
#13 Kali Whitmire
#18 Alyssa Pennies
#24 Renee Groomes
#1 Chloe Krudwig
#2 Ella Heward
#3 River Phillips
#10 Addie McGaughy
#11 Aubrey Turner
#12 Natalie Weed
#21 Bethany Garza
#22 Katherine Morgan

Website connects BCS athletics to all

continued from page 5

but anyone looking into attending games on campus or planning to visit from out of town are now able to get a better glance of what we are all about.

With a better source of information, marketing for the school becomes more aesthetically pleasing, as well as more accessible.

Brentwood's new Sports Information Director is Ethan Grant, and he works not only in the classroom, the basketball court, and softball field, but he has perfected his craft of managing this new addition. Grant works on the website itself daily, keeping scores and schedules up-to-date, integrating social media and writing articles headlining the exceeding accomplishments of BCS athletes.

The athletic department didn't have to only figure out who would be behind the scenes, they had to take action and produce a platform for the website itself. When making the choice, things like other private school athletics websites, collegiate athletics websites, and accessibility were all considered.

Brentwood wanted a high-quality

website without spending unreasonable amounts of money. One option was SideArm Sports, a company primarily known for their work with college athletic programs.

While adapting to SideArm could have worked, the department wanted something that was more fit for high school athletics. Mascot Media checked a majority of the boxes, and today the campus has not only a website for high school, but middle school as well.

Additionally, Mascot Media's services include access to an iPhone and Android app as well, another user-friendly function to keep Bears families plugged in to what's going on with BCS student athletes.

With the completion of launching the new site, the department continues to look to the future. What it holds is a phase two: consisting of things like school records, looking at where seniors are attending college for sports, and overall enhancements.

Check out the athletic websites today and whenever the need for information about BCS sports program arises.



All together The new athletic website page, seen above on a slider of the Lady Bellas, allows for easy navigation and intriguing articles that exemplify the BCS activities.

Homecoming Shines Light on School Spirit

'Road Trip across the USA' produces memorable week



Royalty The 2024 Homecoming King and Queen, Bolu Bayo-Ajayi (left) and Zaniah Williams, walk down the red carpet all smiles during the halftime homecoming game on Sept. 20.