

brackenlife

A BRACKEN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PUBLICATION

MARCH 2006



Word of mouth is our **BEST**
form of advertising!

Students Share Why They Would Tell Others About Bracken



Kevin Riley, 10th Grade

"Yes, I would tell others to come to Bracken! I used to go to public school. Here, we are one big, happy family. We get to really know each other and it's a good Christian atmosphere."



Alyson Scruggs, 7th Grade

"I love Bracken because of it's great Christian environment. Everone is 'real' and open. You can be yourself here and not be made fun of."



Payton Stanush, 6th Grade

"I would definitely tell others to come to Bracken. I like that it is small and everyone is nice."



Colton Stephenson, K5

"Kids will learn more about God here."



**Daniel Haygood
2nd Grade**

"It's a great school and we learn about God."



Rylie Clow, 3rd Grade

"I want others to come here so they can learn more about God."

Quinn Goodman, 3rd Grade

"I would tell others because I want my school to grow and for kids to learn about God."

IN
THIS
ISSUE

REMEMBERING NETTIE DAY **BOX TOPS COMPETITION**
GRANDPARENTS DAY MATH OLYMPICS WINNERS



CRAIG WALKER
administrator

Remembering *the past.*

CAN KEEP US STRONG FOR THE FUTURE!

DEAR BCS FAMILY,

January 14th of this year was just another Saturday to most of us. We had the Saturday list of things to do: sleeping late, a fun family breakfast, a little shopping, etc. It was, however, a day that will never be forgotten by Joe and his family. You see, Joe's wife, Nettie went home to be with the Lord that evening after church. It was not expected. Nothing had prepared them for that day. Nettie was known as a loving wife to Joe and as mother to her sons Brant and Dwayne. Brant is married to Julie who has taught Kindergarten at BCS for many years, and Dwayne is married to Amy, who heads up our Helping Hands ministry. Yes, this Saturday was especially tragic for the Day family because the Lord decided to bring sweet Nettie home to heaven with him.

This article is going to delve into a precious part of the Bracken past because I believe much can be learned to keep us focused on honoring God for the future. You will be blessed if you take the time to read this, and even more blessed to share it with your kids.

The following are some excerpts from testimonial letters that many have written about Nettie, one of our first teachers at Bracken. The effect of her time spent loving kids lives on in all of us today. You can read the full stories that each has written by clicking the link on the BCS website homepage.

Betty Kight, BCS founder and former teacher writes, "Nettie Day was the beloved wife to Joe Day and mother to Brant and Dwayne. She was 'MeMom' to Kasey, Kolton, Karagan, Mallorie, Presley and Alyssa. Nettie Day was a child of God and the epitome of a Christian teacher. Teaching children to love to read and to be excellent readers was her goal. Teaching children was her joy.

Nettie Day was asked to teach a combined 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade class when Bracken Christian School began in the fall of 1982. (Bulverde Baptist Christian School at that time). Mrs. Day committed to her teaching position without the guarantee of a salary that first year! She prayed about God's will in her life, and wanted nothing less than to be an obedient servant. She was the answer to the prayers of those who made the commitment to establish the new Christian school.

Prior to the beginning of the first school year, Mrs. Day and the other teachers went to Pensacola, FL, to the A-Beka Summer Seminar. She quickly adapted her previous teaching experiences to the A-Beka combined-class curriculum. She was able to teach all three grades in an absolutely amazing manner. A small salary was paid that first year, but no amount of compensation could have matched the dedication and hours given to her students. When a need for scholarships arose, Mrs. Day, along with the other teachers (and board members) gave enough from their small salaries to provide the needed funds.

Les Daniel, our first school board president, remembers how her class recited the phonics charts and Bible verses for the church one Sunday. With eyes filled with tears of joy, he was absolutely amazed seeing the students' progress. On another occasion that first year, Mrs. Day was chosen to ride on the school float in the Comal County Fair Parade. She was a shining example of a teacher... sitting at her desk atop the float with all of the school's students around her as she directed their recitation of Bible verses, phonics charts, and songs while they proudly waved to the crowd. The float won a trophy that year with comments from the judges about how disciplined, respectful, smart, and precious the students were as they waited about two hours for the parade to start—singing all the while.

Her husband commented to her just a few months ago that he looked at her and she was "shining." She was so surprised at his comment since she was standing in the kitchen preparing dinner—not exactly a "shining" moment. His sweet comment so impressed her that she mentioned it to several friends. The Lord must have been touching her even then as He was preparing to take her home."

Former student Cecily Herring Breig says, "Originally I knew Nettie as "Mrs. Day." She was my first grade teacher in a little classroom at a little school that became known as Bracken. Through elementary, middle, and high school, students have a multitude of teachers, but only a few have a lasting impact on your life. Mrs. Day had an impact on mine."

Friend and co-worker at Bracken, Jimmie Hitzfelder, remembers, "At the very beginning of Bracken Christian School Nettie Day was on board. Actually when the school was only a dream in Betty Kight's mind, Nettie excitedly saw it as the answer to the need for Christian education in the Bulverde/Spring Branch area. Her love for the Lord and children added to her commitment and dedication, and brought her to an immediate decision to teach a first, second and third grade class.



NETTIE DAY

Remembering Nettie Day

WHO HELPED MAKE BRACKEN WHAT IT IS TODAY

Starting a school was a new experience for all involved, and it required great faith. We started without needed supplies, at a location that was deeply appreciated but required much in the way of moving and rearranging furniture every day, and we lacked financial support. But Nettie was one of those who was committed to make it work. Truly starting a school under these conditions was a daily walk of faith. Nettie was one of those who walked it, and she "walked it" with joy and a beautiful smile. We prayed for the children and with the children about disciplinary action, tests, and attitudes. Many times Nettie and I talked about how much better that was than being unable to pray in public school."

Joanie Dean, a mom and co-worker, recalls, "My son Josh was in Nettie's first class at the school. Josh was a third grader at the elementary school in Bulverde, and he was struggling to read. After two weeks in the public school, I enrolled Josh and his sister Jamie in Bulverde Christian. Josh was in Nettie's class not quite a month and he was reading, not just starting to read, but reading well. She just had a way of reaching children. Josh

she was in our lives, she was such a humble person that I don't think she ever fully accepted it. But, just as her influence will continue to be felt, so will our love for her continue! And we will be enriched by both."

Friend, mom and co-worker Stella Kemp writes, "She was so sweet and had such a great smile. I thought to myself that this teacher can't be this nice! But she never disappointed me. I wondered how she could be so genuine. What I learned in time was that it was God living through her that made her so sweet, so nice, and so genuine.

"I was always impressed by her patience with children. She truly cared about each one of her students, and prayed for them continually. She made the parents want to be better Christians, and her students, too. She taught not by demands, but always by example. She was the kind of friend that, even if you hadn't seen her in a while, she made you feel like you were her best friend. She made everyone feel like that. She was tender yet steadfast in her convictions. I think about how much the world needs people like Nettie Day, but I think maybe God needed some of her smiles, too.

"I wondered how she could be so genuine. What I learned in time was that it was God living through her that made her so sweet, so nice, and so genuine."

now has a Masters Degree and reads anything he can get in his hands. We know that God put Nettie in Josh's life at a time that was so crucial to him, and we will always thank Him for that. I watched as Nettie taught both Josh and Jamie so many things that helped them in life, and, most importantly, gave them a firm foundation in the Lord."

Jill Rathburn, BCS teacher and mom, says, "I first met Nettie Day 21 years ago; my oldest daughter was four, and I was going to 'check out' this little Christian school as a possibility for kindergarten. The school was still meeting in Bulverde Baptist Church; Nettie was teaching a combined 1st and 2nd grade class.

"I enrolled Julie in kindergarten the next year, and our long relationship with Bracken began. Both of my daughters had Nettie as their first-grade teacher. Her influence on them was profound and long-lasting. As they progressed through Bracken and on to college, they never lost touch with her, still exchanging occasional letters and emails. Joe and Nettie Day helped support both of them on periodic mission trips around the world. When I emailed Julie and Jessica about Nettie leaving us so suddenly, I got this in a return email from Jessica: 'Mom, she just emailed me a few days ago. I'm so glad I emailed her back right away...I told her that her influence was being felt half-way across the world as I taught Svyeta how to read from the A-Beka handbook for reading. I simply cannot believe she's gone.' Although we told Nettie what a great teacher she was and what a valuable influence

Remembering the heart, sacrifice and love that Nettie and many others have put into this school makes me proud to be a part of it. I, like you, can get weary at times with the struggles of parenting and keeping focused on godly reading, writing and living. But when I read of the rich heritage of those who have paved the hard road before me, I am humbled and honored to press on to the glory of God. No mere article can do tribute to such a godly example as Nettie Day. There are literally hundreds of walking testimonials of what one little lady did to make a difference for her Lord. She did what she could for Jesus, with joy and prayer and sacrifice. She has entered into her reward and has heard from the lips of her sweet Savior, "Well done, Nettie, good and faithful servant."

Looking back at the dedication and vision that drove teachers like Nettie, serves to inspire me today. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9

Serving Him,



Palmer's Page



MARK PALMER
elementary principal

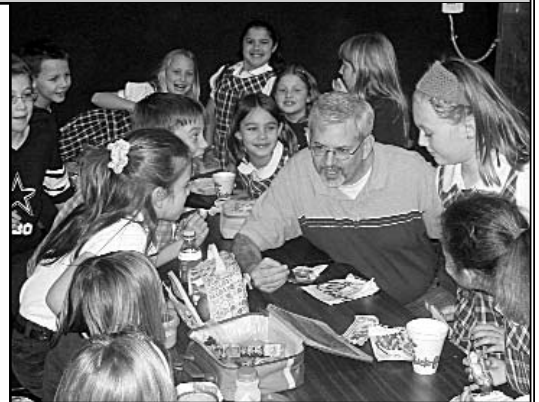
For the last few years I have sold ice cream and milk to the elementary at lunch. I have enjoyed doing this because it

has given me an opportunity to interact with the students in a positive way. These interactions have been limited at best. You can often find me making change, freeing a stuck vending machine item, digging in the ice cream chest for that last cookie cone (for someone else, of course), and eating my own lunch. Chances for real conversations are limited. So, this year I have been having lunch three days a week with various classes. A thank you goes to Tammy Grothues, Grace Wright, and Robin Urbanovsky for filling in with the ice cream and milk sales.

Lunch conversations are a wonderful opportunity to learn what is going on in the heads of our ele-

mentary school environment. Unlike most adults, children are still developing in the way they look at the world. They are teachable and very impressionable. They possess a hunger and an eagerness to grow and to understand. This is not always evident when you are asking them to crack open a math book, but it can readily be seen when you talk with them.

I like to ask a leading question to get a conversation going. Something like, "Who would you say is the most patient in your class?" or "Who is the funniest?" Maybe even, "Who eats the strangest combinations of foods?" We might discuss a half a dozen of these and someone will usually say, "Give us another one." There is no telling where a discussion may go. This may seem somewhat pointless on the surface, but in each discussion there is great opportunity to work in that all important biblical worldview – how they look at



It's standing room only at Mr. Palmer's elementary lunch table.

or riddles makes for a lot of fun, too. I certainly enjoy a willing audience for some of my own stories. I walked over to one student one day to ask a question and, before she was finished answering, half her class had gathered around. When I asked what was going on, someone volunteered that they didn't want to miss a joke. Humor does make ready listeners.

I have also discovered how much popular culture permeates even children's thinking. You would almost have to be on another planet to not observe the increasing use of small electronic devices that captivate the eyes, ears, and minds of young people today. Unless we are careful to ground them in biblical values, they will pick up values from the world around us. It is so important for us to engage them and guide their thinking. They need this from all of us. I encourage you too to find that informal one on one time with your children: have fun and be blest!

Unlike most adults, children are still developing in the way they look at the world... They possess a hunger and an eagerness to grow and to understand.

mentary students. And, before you start to worry about what I may have discovered, let me just say that your children are delightful! Their perspectives on school, food, humor, and life in general often

one another, what is of real value, even the wonder and variety of God's creation. They really eat this up, along with their slice of pizza or chicken nuggets.

Of course, the trading of jokes

BCS Happenings!

ON AND OFF THE CAMPUS

ELEMENTARY MATH OLYMPICS 2006

On Feb. 20th, while most of us were enjoying a relaxing President's Day break, 17 BCS elementary students were competing in the Math Olympics in San Antonio. Participants were from grades 3 through 5 and competed in the areas of computation and reasoning. There were over 160 students in the competition from 11 area schools. All participants received good, excellent or superior ribbons for their efforts, and those who placed in the top five in each testing group were additionally recognized. All of our students received either excellent or superior rankings and/or special recognition. First place student Hannah Hilgendorf also received a gold medal. This speaks well of the hard-working and diligent group of students that were sent and the teachers and families who helped them prepare. A special thank you goes to Mrs. Graves, our Math Olympics Coordinator and to Judy Engberg, Nanette Hilgendorf, and Laura Simmons for helping with the event.



BCS Students at Math Olympics! From left to right: Derek Engberg, Davis Scott, Hannah Moore, Amanda Wilmotte, Evan Bolton, Ashlee Hanz, Rachel Bolton, Connor Simmons, Levi Armijo, Samantha Dickey, Samuel Hilgendorf, Hannah Hilgendorf, Katy Wilmotte, Lauren Berry, Cassie Stirm. Not pictured: Anna Bachman, Kaitlyn Grothues

MATH OLYMPIC RECOGNITION & WINNERS

3rd Grade Computation

Ashlee Hanz - Superior, 2nd
Samuel Hilgendorf - Superior
Amanda Wilmotte - Excellent

4th Grade Computation

Davis Scott - Superior, 3rd
Derek Engberg - Excellent, 4th
Connor Simmons - Excellent

5th Grade Computation

Cassie Stirm - Superior
Samantha Dickey - Excellent
Evan Bolton - Excellent

3rd Grade Reasoning

Hannah Moore - Superior, 5th place
Levi Armijo - Excellent
Rachel Bolton - Excellent

4th Grade Reasoning

Anna Bachman - Excellent
Kaitlyn Grothues - Excellent

5th Grade Reasoning

Hannah Hilgendorf - Superior, 1st, Gold
Lauren Berry - Superior
Katy Wilmotte - Excellent

Refer a family to Bracken and receive a

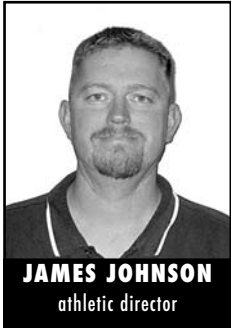
\$300
REFERRAL COUPON
upon their enrollment.

...yours to apply toward any month's tuition.

CRITERIA: When a family you have referred enrolls at BCS, you will be eligible to receive a \$300 coupon if they name you as the referring family on their application form.

Warrior Words

BCS ATHLETICS



BOOSTER CLUB

As was mentioned at the Football Pep Rally, we are currently starting our push to develop a parent lead athletic booster club here at Bracken. The development of a football program is an exciting new stage in our school's history, and with that comes an even greater need for parent participation within the athletic department. Bracken has always been blessed to have parents willing and able to fill many of the needs created by running an athletic program. The addition of football will take us to a new level of need,

however, which will require us to organize our parent support more efficiently than we have in the past.

For those of you who may already have a preconceived notion regarding a booster club, you should know that it is much more than simply "getting stuck" working in the concession stand every few games. While generating revenue is one of the main purposes of a booster club, I would like to see it as an organization that equally helps promote, inform, and support all of our teams and families. Much of a coach's time is spent "putting out fires" from problems caused by misinformation regarding a wide range of topics. Having a booster club that meets regularly will help

alleviate that problem and will also play a part in certain of our decision-making processes. That will definitely improve communication lines between our families and the athletic staff and help us to more effectively serve your children in the area of athletics.

I will be happy to sit down with anyone interested in helping us organize this program at any level. Starting a booster club now in preparation for next year is vital to insure a smooth beginning to our fall sports. I pray that God will bring forward those individuals He calls to this purpose, and that whatever we do will be His will, not our own.

Thanks again to all of those families that continually support us with your efforts and prayers.

WANTED



*All Grandparents & Families
A Special Day Just For You!*

Grandparents Day 2006

Friday, March 31st, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Includes Cowboy Breakfast & A Very Special Program!

RSVP NOW!

Campus Chat

BOYS VS. GIRLS IN BOX TOPS/ SOUP LABEL COMPETITION! **by Mr. Palmer**

The most recent competition in our Elementary soup label and box top collection pitted the girls against the boys creating what appeared to be the hottest competition to date. Altogether, 1,968 of these priceless gems were collected, which topped the charts for any six-week period to date.

Enthusiasm among the students continued to swell as the deadline neared. Would the girls, who may have had a slight advantage in the kitchen realm, or the boys, who could probably edge past the girls in an eating competition, be the winners? The girls had an apparent lead on the last day (88 labels versus 58 for the boys), but the contest dictated that the label tabulation be figured on a per-student basis.

Although the competition was close, the boys ended up sneaking by the girls with nearly 14 labels per student to the girls' slightly over 12 labels per student. The boys earned a casual dress day for their victory, but the satisfaction for winning seemed to be the bigger reward. The girls don't seem to be letting the loss get them down, however. In fact, rumor has it that they're already plotting for next year!

Great job, boys and girls, for what you have done to help our school. We all want to say a big THANK YOU to the parents, grandparents, and friends who blessed Bracken by contributing these labels. The kids had a great time earning money for BCS!



Bracken 7th graders recently headed to the Bob Bullock Texas History Museum in Austin.

11TH ANNUAL



Drive FOR THE Green

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Monday, April 24, 2006
Quarry Golf Club

Volunteers Welcome
Join Our Committee & Make a Difference!

For more information,
call the office at 830-980-3267

Grandparents Day 2006



ANDREA TABLER
development coord.

"Those who are older should speak, for wisdom comes with age." Job 32:7

Indeed, wisdom comes with age. That is just one of the many reasons we want to celebrate, connect and interact with grandparents and other special family members on Grandparents Day, Friday, March 31, 2006.

You and your family are in for a treat! Grandparents Day will kick off with a cowboy breakfast in the gym, thanks to the culinary efforts of Dennis and Kim Rohlmeier. The

event's special program will feature the new BCS choir, elementary presentations, art, the HS praise and worship band, and testimonies by both students and grandparents. Our Grandparents Day team has also planned new interactive activities for students and their visiting family members.

If you and your family have not emailed or called in your RSVP, please do so as soon as possible. Remember, this special day is for all family members, extended family, or special friends of our students.

Don't Forget...
Support the Annual Fund!

ANNUAL FUND TOTAL:
\$72,837.00

Once matched, this brings us to
\$117,837!

FAMILY PARTICIPATION:
44%

brackenlife

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Bulverde, TX 78163

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BULK RATE

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Mr. Mark Palmer	Elementary Principal
Mr. James Johnson	Athletic Director
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Mrs. Judy Engberg	Registrar
Mrs. Tammy Grothues	Secretary/Receptionist
Mrs. Elora Harmon	Secretary/Receptionist
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Mrs. Andrea Tabler	Development Coordinator

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