

# brackenlife

A BRACKEN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PUBLICATION

MAY 2006

## Grandparents Day 2006

The Lord blessed Bracken on Friday, March 31, with a beautiful day in more ways than one! Over 350 grandparents, parents and special friends of BCS students gathered in the gym for a cowboy breakfast and a special program created in their honor. The program included performances by elementary students, the BCS Praise Band and the Bracken Praise Choir; testimonies by Jordan Rohlmeier, Stormie Sanders and Bradley Ortiz; a dance routine by the MS and HS cheerleaders; and thoughts from BCS grandparents Jim Burgess and June Jennings (Memaw). Our special guests visited kids in the classrooms and then headed back to the gym to enjoy a video created by BCS board member Dennis Rohlmeier and a parting gift from the Grandparents Day planning committee.



*Bracken Praise Choir debut performance with K-4 and K-5 classes on Grandparents Day.*



*Katie Riley celebrates Grandparents Day with very special friends from church, Mr. and Mrs. Cox.*

### **PRAISE CHOIR** by Kari Grayson

The Bracken Praise Choir gave its first performance on Grandparents Day, along with the K-4 and K-5 classes. The choir did a tremendous job, and after all their hard work, they were rewarded with a lunch at our local Pizza Hut!

The choir is still open to any MS/HS student who would like to come and sing with us every "A" day before school at 7:30.

Remember that, through music, students are improving their self-discipline and their persistence, which are critical skills to improving academic performance. Music even improves their mathematical skills and ability! Who would have thunk? Plus, we have a blast and gain new friends!!

IN  
THIS  
ISSUE

THE VALUE OF ONE **SPRING CREATIVE ARTS**  
**CALENDAR CHANGES** ELEMENTARY FAITH & FUN



**CRAIG WALKER**  
administrator

# The Value of *One*

**LIVING LIFE WITH NO REGRETS!**

## **DEAR BCS FAMILY,**

At this time in the school year I start looking back in disbelief that it's almost over. Our world is such a quickly changing place that it seems all of life is just racing by. As the parent of a 26 year old and a married 23 year old, I believe that time must have somehow sped up through the years; some kind of a quantum time warp continuum thingy. It was just yesterday that I held my little baby boy and beamed as the proudest dad in the world. Time just stood still and I wanted to relish every minute. Well, maybe not every minute. I do remember praying that the whole dirty diaper and constant spit up adventure would pass quickly!

Now many years have passed, and Linda and I are trying to adjust to the empty nest syndrome. I must say we love it (my words not hers). At this time in life you may begin to second guess many of your parenting decisions. Should we have done this, said that, provided differently, pushed more, criticized less, and on and on it goes. The one constant that we all deal with in parenting is the same one that we have no control over...TIME. It has, is, and will continue marching on just as it has since God started the clock ticking, and there is nothing you or I can do about it. It's neat that God apportioned out time evenly to us all. No one has any extra days or hours rewarded because of good behavior. It's what we DO with the time we're given that matters.

What I know the Bible teaches, and I hope to pass on to you, is this: there is great value in ONE! Life is made up of numerous ones. Every child is a precious one from God for us to love, teach, and grow with. You only have one opportunity to live today. You only have one shot at the next hour. The next minute will be gone before you realize it; therefore, you must live the life God has given you with purpose. Don't have regrets that you were always too busy. Chart a course for your life of no-regret parenting and no-regret marriage. Fill your heart and mind with God's Word.

Read some good books on Christian parenting and marriage. The minutes will quickly turn into days and the days into years. There is an old saying which states, "Only one life, 'twill soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last."

Make a purposeful decision to die to self and live for the Lord by loving your kids, your spouse, and your friends in new and honoring ways. No one has ever confessed regret from their deathbed for not having spent more time at the office. The concern is not that I wish I had watched more movies or fed my body more food or made more money. The comments are always the same, regardless of race or gender and whether rich or poor, "I wish I had spent more time with my family." Do it now.

The Easter story is God's unexplainable example of love for us. If it had been only ONE (that's you) in need of a Savior, Jesus would have still gladly died. You are His creation, and He desires your joyful obedience to His will and ways. You were created for relationship. Are you living every moment for Christ? Are you looking for ways to create loving and lasting memories with your family? At Bracken Christian School the godly family is something we are committed to work on together. I am committed to no-regret Christian education.

One final note of encouragement; my children, though still young adults, regularly thank Linda and I for the Christian upbringing they received (and still receive every chance I get). They have moved out of the nest and are experiencing all the pressures and temptations that every parent prays about on behalf of their children. Don't get me wrong, my children aren't saints, but we are seeing them choose the Lord. God's Word is true and I pray for each of you to not grow weary in well doing.

Serving together,

# Elementary Fun & Faith!

## **FIFTH GRADERS ENJOY TEAM BUILDING & CHALLENGE COURSE**

April 6th was an action packed day for the fifth grade. The class visited the John Newcombe Tennis Ranch in New Braunfels to participate in the team building program and challenge course. In the morning, students took part in some cooperative activities that were aimed at improving communication, encouragement, and decision-making skills. After each activity the students gathered to discuss some things they learned about themselves and the group. Biblical principles were also discussed, and students had an opportunity to really think about their actions and how they affected others. It was a fun learning and bonding experience.

The afternoon activities were also very exciting. The students, some parents, Mrs. Graves, and Mr. Palmer all joined in the fun on the high ropes course. Though it was scary for most, everyone was able to conquer fear to some degree. Self confidence and trust were developed as partners worked together on the "Trust Bridge" crossing a high wire 30 feet in the air. Others took the "Leap of Faith" from the top of a 35-foot telephone pole. Some even climbed to the 50-foot high platform to plummet in a 30-foot free fall called the "Screamer" or to zip down the "Zip Line." It was an exciting and educational day for fifth grade.



*Katy Wilmotte reciting scripture as she gets ready to cross the high wire.*



*Fifth graders learn the importance of teamwork to accomplish a task!*

## **MRS. GRAVES RECOGNIZED BY SYLVAN**

Mrs. Graves was recognized by Sylvan Learning as a teacher who goes beyond the call of duty and was given their "Exceptional Classroom Award." The recognition comes with a \$250 cash award that will be directed toward materials that Mrs. Graves requested to enhance history and geography lessons in the 5th grade. The money will be spent for a GeoSafari Electronic Learning Game, headphones, lesson packs and other supplemental materials. Thank you, Mrs. Graves, for what you are doing with our fifth graders. Thank you, Sylvan Learning, for encouraging Mrs. Graves and gifting our fifth grade students.

## **BUTTERFLIES GALORE!**

Mrs. Griffin's class recently "raised" Painted Lady butterflies. They received the cultures, observed them, and recorded their observations in a journal. The class waited anxiously to see the caterpillars form their chrysalides and eventually witness the emergence of the newly formed butterflies. The butterflies finally emerged and the class celebrated with a "release ceremony." Mrs. Griffin's classes have been doing this activity for the last four years. It is always educational and enjoyable.

# God Is *Intolerant*

BY DAWN MARSHALL

God is intolerant. Doesn't that sound politically incorrect? God has called us to be intolerant of sin and we as Christians should care more deeply about offending God than about how others view us.

God has laid upon my heart to study and share something He is very intolerant of, but we are all guilty of...gossip!

What is gossip? Different sources say it is slander, false witness, whispering, tale-bearing, etc. The Bible tells us we should be focused on what is true, uplifting, and encouraging, but our mouths are also capable of spewing destruction.

What do I mean by destruction? I mean all the effects of gossip according to God's Word: separation of friends (Proverbs 16:28 and 17:9), deadly wounds (Proverbs 18:8 and 26:2), strife (Proverbs 26:20), discord among the brethren (Proverbs 6:19), murder (Psalm 31:13 and Ezek. 22:9), enmity (Psalm 140:3 and Eccl. 10:1), and destruction (Proverbs 11:9).

Matthew 12:36 says we will all have to give account for EVERY careless word we have spoken and that would include gossip. I know this warning will help me the next time I begin to speak without thinking first.

Deuteronomy 19:16-21 says if someone is proven to bare false witness (gossip) that we should

"purge the evil from among you [us]." It also says we should have no pity on gossipers. You may be thinking, "Evil?" The Bible instructs in Revelation 12:10 that gossip (the accuser) is characteristic of the devil himself. Psalm 50:20 says that evil people are addicted to gossip. In this passage God gives His last chance for evil men. Luke 6:45 states that gossip is a bad fruit produced from an evil heart, and



Psalm 109:3 states that gossip often arises from hatred. Psalm 109:3 also shows us David's prayer for curses upon the wicked.

No one wants to be called 'evil' or 'wicked,' but God shows us in His Word that this is what He calls those who gossip. So you may ask, "What's your point?"

As parents, teachers, staff, and students affiliated with Bracken Christian School, we should hold ourselves accountable for what

comes from our mouths. As adults, when we hear a child or another adult gossip, do we stop and listen? The Bible says in Titus 2 that as adults we should counsel the younger generations in integrity, seriousness, and soundness of speech so those who oppose us have nothing to say against us.

As a family, Bracken Christian School needs to guard itself against such destructive behavior like gossip. We are being watched, and those who oppose us want us to stumble. 1 Samuel 24:9 says we should not listen to gossip. If people listen to gossip, they are enabling wickedness to continue.

Stifle the gossiper! Change the direction of conversation to lift up and encourage the person being talked about. If what is being said is not encouraging or uplifting, then it shouldn't be said. We as Christians must put a stop to it!

As parents and teachers we should stop and correct our children when we hear gossip. We should explain what the Word of God says and encourage our children to live above wickedness.

We all struggle in this area—some of us more than others! Yet I hope we will all be encouraged to stop that all-too-accepted, destructive, and ungodly behavior: gossip! Let us stand out above the rest and strive to be more like Christ in our speech and communication.

# Campus Chat

## STUDENTS BLESS THE BOARD

Several years ago, one of our 2nd grade teachers started a new ministry with her students. Mrs. Debbie Schoeben knew it was important for her young charges to understand the role and importance of the men serving on Bracken's Board of Directors. To accomplish this goal, she put into place a prayer schedule for the year that focused on one particular Board member and his family per month. Mrs. Schoeben knew that she and her students

to thank the Board member for his service to and love of God and Bracken.

During the year, the students each acquired a new appreciation for the Board members and what it takes to plan and care for our school that they may not have gained otherwise. The blessings received by our students have been many. Mrs. Griffin, whose class participates in this ministry, says that the response from the Board has been immeasurable. Board members have written thank-

**Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.  
Thessalonians 5:11**

would benefit greatly from "getting to know" those authority figures by supplying them with special gifts and encouraging them with concerted prayers for a period of one month.

They began each month by placing a picture in their classroom of the Board member on whom they would focus their efforts in order that the students could put a face with the name. The students prayed every day for that member and his family. During the course of the month, the children would bring in special snacks (pretzels, granola bars, jerky, etc.) to place in a gift bag at the end of the month. The students would also include personalized letters

you notes and even visited various classrooms to say thank you and to let the children know how much they were blessed by the prayers and gifts.

The obedience of one teacher and her students to bless others in the name of Jesus has resulted in growth of the ministry. Because of the positive impact this has had on the students and the Board members, several other elementary classes have opted to celebrate our Board of Directors in this way, too. Those teachers each look forward to continuing to lift up the men of the Board with their students year after year.

## TUITION UPDATE

Tuition is due June 1st for those families who are on the 12-month payment plan for this current school year. Even though school is "out," there is still one more tuition payment due, and statements will go out around June 11.

## WINNERS AT STATE ACADEMIC MEET!

Luke Preston	Persuasive Speaking	6th place
Michael Shaffer	Current Events	4th place
Jason Lingle	Computer Science	1st place

## It's Not Too Late To Support the Annual Fund!

**ANNUAL FUND TOTAL:  
\$82,179.31**

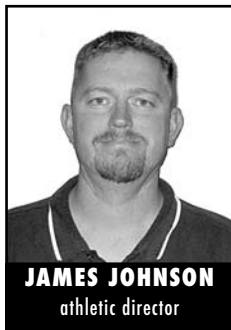
Once matched, this brings us to \$127,179.31!

**FAMILY PARTICIPATION: 45%**

**STAFF PARTICIPATION: 58%**

# Warrior Words

BCS ATHLETICS



## BASKETBALL HONORS

I would like to congratulate Amy Paul, Tiffany Wetz, and Kevin Riley for being selected to the All-District basketball teams this past season. Amy was selected 2nd Team All-District while Tiffany and Kevin were selected to the All-District Honorable Mention team. These players excelled all year, and we are proud of them for receiving these honors.

## FOOTBALL COACHING OPENINGS

We are currently in the process of trying to hire our head football coach for next year. Our current search involves hiring a full-time teacher to oversee the entire program, however, we will be in need of several assistant coaches for both the middle school and high school levels once that position is filled. We are asking if there are any parents in the school with a background in football that may be interested in applying for these assistant coaching positions. Anyone interested in helping out next year will need to apply for that position and go through an interview process just as any other teacher or coach would do. If you are interested please contact the school office and request a coaching application. Once completed, you may return it to the office, and you will be contacted to schedule an interview. If you have any questions please give me a call.



*Amy Paul, Kevin Riley and Tiffany Wetz selected to All-District basketball teams.*

## BOOSTER CLUB MEETING

It's that time. With summer right around the corner and before we all go our separate ways for a few months, it is time to start lining things up for next year. With all the new activities beginning next year, it is imperative that we begin planning now. There will be an organizational meeting on Tuesday, May 9th, at 6:00 p.m. in the gym. I will attempt to contact those who expressed an interest at the pep rally and after. Feel free to invite other parents or even families that you may know who will be starting here next year. If the booster club is going to be successful it has to be lead by parents and families that want to see our athletic department grow and develop. Please help get the word out and try to be there to get things going for next year!

## ATTENTION: CALENDAR CHANGES

**Kindergarten Graduation** will be on Tues., May 23rd at 7:00 pm in the gym (not on Wed).

**Eighth Grade Graduates** will present a chapel on Thursday, May 25th in the morning, followed by a reception and celebration (not a luncheon on the 26th).

**Fifth Grade Graduation** will be during Elementary Awards Chapel on May 26th. A celebration will follow chapel (not a luncheon on the 25th).

# Creative Arts

BY BETH PRESTON

A creative spirit has been moving at Bracken, and the students have been coming up with many things bright and beautiful. It's wonderful to see how the Lord has gifted students in the area of art and to see them excited about glorifying Him in this way.

**TAPPS COMPETITION:** For the first time, Bracken students competed in Art History in the district and state TAPPS competitions. Devon Gearhart and Tyler Browning took first and second place, respectively. Devon also competed in the state competition. In the Fine Art competition at district, Jordan Engberg took first place in relief sculpture, Jessica Dudley second, Anella King third, and Joy Rheman fourth. Channah Topperwein also placed. Cody Hitchcock received Honorable Mention in photography at the district meet, and Jordan Engberg received Honorable Mention in sculpture. Joy Rheman took part in the On-Site Photography contest at the state meet, taking fourth place. Congratulations to all!

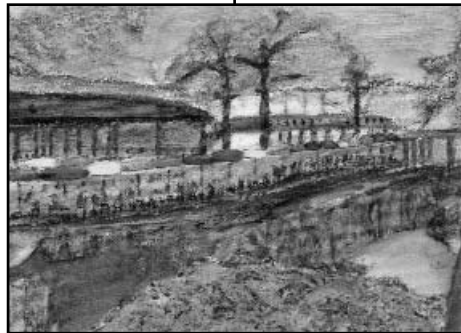
**EIGHTH GRADE** students have been learning the elements of design: color, form, space, line, and texture. On display outside the art room are their projects using this knowledge in an assignment showing that Jesus is the bridge between God and man.

**ART 1** students have been working on some awesome paintings this quarter. Currently they have been experimenting with acrylics and working on the style of realism. The last project that they will be involved in will be a study on surrealism. There are some incredible pieces of artwork still displayed in Mr. Rodriguez's room. Come check them out!

**ART 2** students have voted on what projects they would like to do this quarter. Their first choice was photography. With the gracious help of Mr. Brian Swierc, students are learning what makes a good photograph

and how to take one. So if you see art students wandering around campus with their cameras, they are on assignment. Smile...you may be on Candid Camera!

**ART HISTORY** students do hands-on art projects that correspond to the period of art they are studying. We are currently studying 20th Century Art, learning that while some artists of this period tried to be like God in thinking that they could create something that had not existed before, other artists merely wanted to portray objects and ideas in new and different ways. Christian



*Art history students paint their impressions of San Antonio.*

artists continued to glorify God with the gift He had given them. Our students have been using their gifts while trying their hands at Cubism, a style that uses geometric shapes to show all aspects of an object at the same time. They have also made wire and clay sculptures in the style of Alexander Calder, a modern American sculptor. Come see the work of our young 21st Century artists!

**THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** has been participating in the Awesome Elephants Art Contest through the McNay Museum. They have all done art projects involving elephants, and many submitted their artwork to the contest. Mr. Palmer and Mr. Rodriguez were our judges. We could only send 10 pieces of art to the museum for the next round of competition. Katy Wilmotte, Hannah Hilgendorf, Anna Bachman, Kimberly Dao, Samuel Hilgendorf, Ashlee Hanz, Hannah Moore, Matthew McNeill, Audrey Coffey, and Nick Lewis were our school winners. Their work was displayed at the McNay Museum at the Bravo Babar! Family Day, Sunday, May 7. Katy Wilmotte won first place in her category, and Hannah Moore won second place in her age group. In addition, Hannah Hilgendorf and Ashlee Hanz received Honorable Mention for their artwork. Congratulations to our winners and to all our awesome artists!

# Join BCS Families for Summer River Fellowship



Last summer, several Bracken families met at the Guadalupe River State Park on Tuesday afternoons. We had so much fun that we're doing it again this year!! Each Tuesday afternoon, folks gather between the hours of noon and 4:00 p.m., so feel free to join us for any length of time within that range. There's no need to RSVP because no one is in charge. Bring your own food and see who shows up! Each week attendees vary, but if you think you won't know someone, call some of your son's or daughter's classmates to meet you there, or simply show up and meet new people. No matter who's there, though, the time spent in this beautiful setting with your kids will make many wonderful memories. See you on the Guadalupe!!

## brackenlife

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BULK RATE

### ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Craig Walker	Administrator/Business Manager
Mr. Jim Cagle	Secondary Principal
Mr. Mark Palmer	Elementary Principal
Mr. James Johnson	Athletic Director
Ms. Cris Brisbin	Technology Coordinator
Mrs. Judy Engberg	Registrar
Mrs. Tammy Grothues	Secretary/Receptionist
Mrs. Elora Harmon	Secretary/Receptionist
Mrs. Leslie Koch	Bookkeeper
Mrs. Libby Matthews	Tuition
Mr. David Ross	Maintenance
Mrs. Laura Simmons	College Coordinator
Mrs. Andrea Tabler	Development Coordinator

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