

# THE BEAR FACTS

## BRUIN BITES

### BLACK HISTORY PROGRAM



CRYSTAL THOMAS

St. Joseph students are hard at work preparing for the school's annual Black History Month program set for Wednesday, Feb. 28.

Black History Month is a time set aside to honor the lengthy accomplishments of African Americans throughout American history.

The annual Black History Month program at Saint Joseph helps to draw attention to important events in the nation's past.

This year's program is coordinated by Ms. Crystal Thomas, Saint Joseph's biology teacher.

### DRIVER'S EDUCATION CLASS

St. Joseph students have the opportunity to take a driver's education course taught by Coach Joe Harris.



To enroll, students must be at least 14 before May 12. Classes meet at 7 a.m. every Wednesday in the Library. Classes begin February 14 and end May 9.

Cost for the class is \$250.

### BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION



Students who turn in 15 Box Tops by the end of February are rewarded with a free dress day.

The student that contributes the most Box Tops from each grade wins a \$15 gift card.

## SPORTS

### TREY FRIERSON'S IMPRESSIVE CAREER

Sports Editor Joe Pearson writes about how senior Trey Frierson's high school successes have been shaped by challenges he has faced and overcome throughout his young life.



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### BRUIN BASKETBALL ON A ROLL



With just a few more regular season games remaining, the Bruins are in a great spot as they eye post-season play.

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## Drawdown set for Saturday night

Hundreds expected to attend St. Joe's largest annual fundraiser

By KAILEY LUSTER  
*The Bear Facts*

One lucky winner could walk home with \$10,000 Saturday night from St. Joseph's annual Drawdown.

The Drawdown is St. Joseph's largest annual fundraiser. Participants

have a chance to win \$10,000 as well as many other prizes including ones from silent and live auctions.

"I am most excited about the food tent, it is something new and different. We are hoping it will help the flow of traffic be smooth and easier," said Kinshasa Watson, drawdown chair member.

For \$130 a couple, guests will dine on gourmet food prepared by the Knights of Columbus from St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church.

In addition, they will be able to bid on prizes offered in the silent and live auctions that include a weekend at the Buckhead in the mountains of

Ashford, N.C.; tickets to an Ole Miss baseball game; and a signed Dak Prescott jersey.

And, of course, guests will have a chance at the grand prize of \$10,000 in cash. The Drawdown is a reverse raffle in which the last name drawn is the winner.

The event will be in the St. Joe gym; doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

See **DRAWDOWN**, Page 3

## Finding God through faith and knowledge



Catholic Schools Week highlights value of Catholic education

Story by Bianca McCarty

From the classroom to the hallways of St. Joseph Catholic School, faith is deeply ingrained in the lives of every student every day.

"God is the center of your life, and everything stems from that," Mary Greene, a St. Joe junior, said.

St. Joseph Catholic School is the only Catholic high school in metropolitan Jackson. Because of that, the school goes a long way in developing students' religious faith, their academic excellence and their athletic competition.

As St. Joe and hundreds of other Catholic elementary and high schools celebrate Catholic

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK 2018**  
**A BRUIN NEWS NOW THE BEAR FACTS SPECIAL REPORT**

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ABOVE: Katie Joseph and Mrs. Vicki Rannels sort through donated food. Students collect non-perishable food items for a Catholic Schools Week food drive benefiting the St. Vincent dePaul Society.

MAIN PHOTO: J.T. Beatty, Kathleen Abadie and Thyme Turner pray the Rosary on Monday while a statue of Mary stands over the St. Joseph Catholic School Rosary Garden. Students used the prayer to mark the first day of Catholic Schools Week 2018.

Photos by Bailey Miller/The Bear Facts

Schools Week 2018, faith development is often cited as one of the main reasons behind the success of Catholic education.

At St. Joe, a school of more than 400 students in Grades 7 through 12, celebrating and shepherding Catholic faith is front-and-center every day of the school year in religion and theology classes as well as in other subjects.

See **CATHOLIC FAITH**, Page 4

## St. Joe seventh graders show smarts

By LAKE DODSON  
*The Bear Facts*

Two seventh graders won the 2018 St. Joseph Catholic School Spelling Bee and Geography Bee, advancing to the next round on their way to the state competition.

Natalia Igwebuikwe took first in the spelling bee on Thursday, Jan. 11, while Andrew Smith won the geography bee on Tuesday, Jan. 23.

Igwebuikwe last week won the Madison County Spelling Bee and will next compete in the state bee – with the winner heading to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in May.

Smith will take an online test to qualify for the state geography bee. The winner of that contest will advance to the National Geographic Bee later this year.

"I'm just happy and proud," Smith

said after winning the St. Joe bee.

"There were a few times during it where I felt like I was (on) the ropes," he said. "It was a very, very close geography bee."

Smith was the last student standing among 11 seventh- and eighth-graders who began the geography bee. The number steadily dwindled with each question until Smith was the last one standing.

Mary Lee Topik finished second and Kelsey Shaffer finished last.

In the spelling bee, Igwebuikwe correctly spelled the word "consecutive" to win competition. Noah Hawkins took second place and Ethan McNabb finished third.

"I felt really great," Igwebuikwe said after her victory.

See **SMARTS**, Page 3

## The value of Catholic education

In the spirit of Catholic Schools Week, I thought it would be appropriate to explain the value of my Catholic education.



BLAINE TURNER  
editor

First, the priceless importance of Catholic education has been instilled in me since I was younger.

Both of my parents are Catholic high school graduates. So, they understand the value and want continue to instill the importance of Catholic education in me and my siblings.

I have been a Catholic school student since I was in prekindergarten. There are three values that Catholic education has ingrained in me. These values include putting your faith at the center of your life, the importance of equality and the essential nature of service.

Being in Catholic school puts your faith at the center of life because your faith is part of your curriculum. Religion is a class that you're required to take, and you learn much more than just the parts of Mass.

At St. Joe we have Mass weekly so you get to experience Christ. We begin everything with prayer. By having your faith at the center of everything you do while at school, you learn that your faith should be the most important

**“ Being in a Catholic school puts your faith at the center of your life because your faith is part of your curriculum.”**

thing in your life.

Catholic by definition means universal. The universal nature of the Catholicism is another value that Catholic school students learn. A prime example of this would be our uniforms.

We are all supposed to wear the same thing. Uniforms equalize each student and force us to see each other the way God sees us – all made in His image. They also force us to look past who's wearing what and look at the person as a whole instead of what they wear.

Service is another pillar of Catholic education. Every year at St. Joe we're required to complete service hours. Although at first it may seem to be a chore, it forces you to go out into the community to make a difference



File photo/The Bear Facts

St. Joseph students celebrate weekly Mass in the Fine Arts theater every Thursday.

one hour at a time. It also makes service an imperative part of your life.

So when asked what does Catholic education mean to me, it means being prepared to meet any challenges in my life while also being prepared spiritually. Based on my experience with Catholic education, I decided to continue my education at a Catholic university – Xavier University of Louisiana.

Marlene Turner, my mother, said it best. “My experience as a Catholic student shaped my life in several ways. I was able to establish lifelong connections to like-minded people. It also inspired me to want to children to have the same experience. In my mind there's no better way to educate your children, than providing a Catholic Education.”

### Our view

## Thank you to our parents

Every parent has their own reason for choosing to send their child to a Catholic school. With Catholic Schools Week winding down to a close today, we need to say exactly what it means to attend a Catholic school.

For many parents, it is a serious sacrifice – one that provides us, their children, with exemplary teachers and administrators who strive to create and maintain a stable and respectful learning environment.

Catholic education is a sacrifice by our parents that provides us, their children, with an opportunity to learn about a faith built on love, acceptance and peace.

As students of a locally renowned Catholic school, we are also given the gift of a smaller pool of students that quickly translates into a more personal learning experience in classes where teachers know each of their pupils by name.

In this way, we are deeply blessed and clearly cared for by the parents who make this incredible blessing possible. Having the ability to attend a school of this caliber is a privilege that many here may occasionally take for granted.

It's easy to take something that can come to feel so much like home for granted.

So, in case that we don't say it enough – and that is entirely possible – we students in this great school and across the state, this nation and this world do see your sacrifices and thank you for it every day.

Thank you for giving us the gift of St. Joseph Catholic School.

## How Catholic school has changed in time

We've all heard the stories from our older relatives beginning with the infamous words, “When I was your age.”

But when it comes to the education we receive, the difference can be striking.

Over the long weekend gifted to us by Mother Nature, I had the opportunity to interview three of my relatives over e-mail, through the phone and in person about how Catholic education has changed through time.

I was offered in return for these questions both hysterical stories and daunting rules that I could never see my classmates nor myself being able to follow.

The only person I spoke to who had the experience of a co-ed, or a school that teaches both girls and boys, attended high school during the 1940s.

Surprisingly enough, there were few



KIM KAISER  
columnist

**“ I was shocked to hear of having to use regulated backpacks.”**

differences between then and now in this case. Attending a co-ed in his early years of high school and at an all-boy's institution in later years, he claimed that he felt their was little-to-no difference between the two.

Myself having always gone to co-ed schools, I can hardly imagine taking part in classes filled with only girls.

He further detailed that through his entire high school experience, diverse as it was being split between several schools, all of his teachers were friars, save for the coaches, who were considered “lay teachers” – a term I had never even heard of before beginning the interviews.

The only female of the little group and the only one of the three to claim strong dislike for going to a school exclusively with people of her own gender went to school in the early 1960s. Out of the three, I found this Catholic school experience the most unlike my own.

Everyone has heard of being taught by nuns and wearing skirts that have to hit the floor when kneeling, but I was shocked to learn about having to use regulated backpacks and not being allowed to speak in the hallways between classes – a rule I know that many St. Joseph students (myself included) would have issues complying

**“ All of his teachers were friars, save for the coaches, who were ‘lay teachers’”**

## A new year with new opportunities

Another year came to a close, and a new one has begun.

2017 was filled with countless events, some wonderful, some horrible.

As every year, it can't be labeled as a “good” or “bad” year because it's frankly more complicated than that.

The world is filled with more than 7 billion people who all had incredibly different experiences last year. The beauty of the human species is the different ways we see the world. Billions of opinions and unique happenings make up an individual's perception of a year, so naturally we all have wildly different opinions.

“New year, new me,” is a phrase that we have all heard and possibly said far too much. With a new year comes the idea that positive change is easy and that we can all achieve a healthier lifestyle, better grades or whatever our personal goals are.

Truthfully, the flipping of another calendar page doesn't change who you were the previous year. People and their habits don't change overnight. Achieving any goal takes time and hard work. We live in an instantaneous world, where a wealth of information and media is at our fingertips, quite literally. No one wants to hear that becoming a better person, both mentally and physically, takes work.

From my experience, the best way to achieve massive goals is through little ones. Say you have a goal to make all A's honor roll in the second semester. If you expect yourself to get



BIANCA MCCARTY



all one hundreds on every single assignment, you will only end up disappointed in yourself and stressed (believe me, I know).

Another trend we see around the new year is people saying things along the line of, “2018 is going to be a good year filled with only wholesome things and sunshine!” That might have been a slight exaggeration, but that is basically what these people are saying.

Most likely, these people had a less than stellar 2017 and are just looking for some positivity in 2018. It isn't wrong to go into 2018 very optimistic, but it isn't healthy or realistic to tell yourself that nothing “bad” is going to happen this year and everything is going to be

rainbows and sparkles, or that “this is the year that everything in the world sorts itself out.”

Those statements simply aren't true and never will be. If you tell yourself this, you will only end up disappointed. You can't control the entire world. You can only control yourself. If you want to have a good year, you can make steps to make yourself the best person you can. If every person in the world did this, it would make a huge difference in the world and how we see each other.

Let's face it. This year isn't going to be perfect, not even close, but that doesn't mean it won't be a good year.

Here's to 2018.

## The BEAR FACTS

Blaine Turner  
Editor

Joe Pearson  
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## Pep rallies require much preparation

By **BIANCA McCARTY**  
*The Bear Facts*

Pep Rallies at St. Joseph Catholic School during the fall semester are always a big hit, but a lot happens behind the scenes that people rarely see.

At first glance, throwing together a pep rally seems relatively easy. But there is so much going on that cannot be seen by the naked eye.

The cheerleaders, band and Spirit Steppers practice everyday to put the event together

“Pep rallies are important to our school, because so many different groups and people are involved,” said Mrs. Rachel Cole, the cheerleading coach.

Mrs. Cole is correct. The entire school is involved with

pep rallies in some way or another. Pep rallies raise the school morale and get students and players excited for the game.

The St. Joe cheerleaders are a huge part of the event. Cheerleaders practice everyday in the fall from 2-4 p.m. or longer. Practices also take place during the summer, including a summer camp in July.

Despite the amount of work it takes, ninth-grader Augusta Hirn said she has a great time.

“My favorite part about pep rallies are the games because the students are involved,” she said.

Pep rallies often include games for the students to participate in, including the students who aren't athletes or involved in the pep rallies in any way.

Hirn also discussed how she feels

**“ Pep rallies are important . . . because so many different groups and people are involved.”**

– Mrs. Rachel Cole, cheer coach

nervous while performing, but enjoys preparing because she finds it fun and exciting.

“I’m always looking forward to stunting, because you get to try out new fun ways you can stunt.”

The cheerleaders also decide the theme for the pep rallies. Members pool together ideas from the team and also from other students.

Once a list of themes is compiled, the list is submitted to Principal Dena Kinsey for approval and then the themes are assigned to each pep rally.

The Spirit Steppers, lead by Ms. Leslie Harkins, the theatre teacher and the Spirit Stepper coach, are also a large part of putting the pep rallies together.

“When I first started working at St. Joe that was one of my favorite things about it because I know a lot of schools in other areas in the state it’s very individualized,” Ms. Harkins said.

“And what I love about St. Joe is that we all really get a chance to work together and bounce ideas off of each

other.” The school band is another vital part of the pep rallies.

The band starts practicing during summer band camp throughout the football season.

Mr. Ronnie Russel, the director of the Bruin band, says organizing the pep rallies isn’t difficult and unforeseen problems, such as sound system issues, cause most of the difficulties.

Mr. Russel thinks pep rallies are important for the school for many reasons.

“It gives us a chance to come together as one spirit of support for the school and for the athletics,” he said.

“It gives us a little sense of unity, the spirit aspect of it, the school spirit, something to be proud of.”

### DRAWDOWN, from Page 1

If the event has not already sold out, anyone interested in attending can purchase them at the school office or online at [www.stjoedrawdown.com](http://www.stjoedrawdown.com).

In previous years, food was served in the St. Joe gym.

This year’s event will feature a food tent with chandeliers. Food will be served buffet-style with a menu that includes beef tenderloin and lamb chops.

A new addition this year is a jazz lounge with a band featuring Tiger Rogers.

The First Choice raffle is also a part of this year’s fundraiser. The First Choice is a raffle; the winner can choose any live auction item before they go up for auction.

Draw down T-shirts are also being sold this year. Students can wear them on Fridays to school. T-shirts can be purchased on the St. Joe website.

“The Drawdown committee would like to send their condolences to Beth Ann Hinds. She was a very important part and served in many ways for the draw down,” Watson said.

### SMARTS, from Page 1

“I won previous spelling bees before,” she said. “My highest point in spelling bee was going to state last year. And I really hope I can win county again and go to state.”

That’s exactly what happened. She won the county bee and is headed to state.

Educators said both the spelling bee and the geography bee are great competitions that encourage students to learn.

“It’s absolutely essential that we know our geography, that we know our culture, that we know not just locally but globally ” said Mrs. Brenda Cofer, the seventh grade teacher who moderated the geography bee.

“We need to know what is happening around the world – and not just what is happening but where it’s happening.”

**“ We need to know what is happening around the world – and not just what is happening, but where it’s happening.”**

– Mrs. Brenda Cofer, seventh grade teacher

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THE BEAR FACTS & BRUIN NEWS NOW SPECIAL REPORT: CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

## St. Joe leaves legacy of strong academics

By **RODNEY SELF**  
*The Bear Facts*

For years, St. Joseph Catholic School has left a lasting legacy of strong academic success among hundreds of graduates.

From finalists for scholarships, the National Merit Scholarship Corp. to consistently high scores on the ACT, students have found great success in the classroom.

“It was strange for me at first, attending a Catholic School,” said Maren Hrivnak, a senior at St. Joe. “I wasn’t exposed to a Theology class, but it has been fulfilling in helping me further my religious understanding.”

As St. Joseph Catholic School joins thousands of schools across the state and nation celebrating Catholic Schools Week, faculty, administrators and students point to academics as one of the schools’ great strengths.

In fact, Niche.com, a national website that rates high schools and colleges, has St. Joe the best Catholic high school in Mississippi – besting schools in Bay St. Louis, Biloxi, Greenville, Natchez and Vicksburg.

Hrivnak transferred to St. Joe from Madison Central High School. She



said attending Catholic school has helped her develop her own faith, even though she is not Catholic.

“I feel prepared for college,” she said. “I have teachers that care about me and that will support me after St. Joe.”

Many St. Joe graduates usually attend college. Some graduates even return to St. Joe in an effort to give back to the school.

Ms. Kathryn Sckiets, Ms. Leslie Ann Harkins, Mr. Matthew Sigler, and Mr. Ryan Starret are St. Joe alumni who have returned to their alma mater as educators.

“St. Joe prepared me in a lot of different ways in critical thinking skills in all subjects and really practical things,” Ms. Sckiets said.

Sckiets, a 2013 Bruin graduate, earned a bachelor’s degree in English

from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. She teaches ninth grade English and is the campus minister.

“Speaking from an English perspective, I was able to analyze literature and participate in class discussions better because of what St. Joe taught me,” she said.

Mr. Sigler, an eighth grade English teacher and assistant football and baseball coach, learned similar skills at St. Joe student. Signer earned a journalism degree from Ole Miss; he worked at newspapers before he returned to St. Joe.

Sigler’s days at St. Joe helped him learn how to take notes and choose vital information in his college lecture classes.

“I had to take History 101 my freshman year, second semester, in a big auditorium, and the professor walks in with her nice briefcase and projector behind her,” Mr. Sigler said. “She walks in, sets her briefcase down, hits play and there is just this picture behind her.

“I just remember the same shock we had in Mrs. Dickson’s class, when she taught like that. I literally thought, ‘This is Sue Dickson,’ but I was ready

**ABOUT THIS SPECIAL REPORT**

*The Bear Facts* and *Bruin News Now* have joined forces for this special report celebrating Catholic Schools Week – highlighting the benefits of Catholic education.

**INSIDE THE BEAR FACTS:**

- St. Joseph legacy includes strong faith, academic and athletics, **PAGES 1, 4**
- Interview with longtime St. Joe educator David Wissel, **PAGE 5**
- Essays from students at Jackson-area elementary schools, **PAGE 5**
- Blaine Turner column, staff editorial, **PAGE 2**

**ON BRUIN NEWS NOW:**

- This week’s edition was filmed on location at St. Richard Catholic School and features a look at the school’s contributions to Catholic education.
- You can view *Bruin News Now* on the BNN channel on YouTube.

(for college).”

The St. Joe community and academics are what make Catholic schools as a whole, a unique experience.

“It’s a smaller school,” Hrivnak

“Teachers really get to know your students, and they truly care about us.”

“Once you’re apart of the St. Joseph family, you are always apart of the St. Joe family.”

## Bruin athletics build character in St. Joe students

By **LEAH CLARK**  
*The Bear Facts*

St. Joseph Catholic School’s athletic program is an important part of the Catholic school education that the school offers to students.

The athletic program of St. Joe offers many options, including football, cheerleading, tennis, basketball, golf, and many more.

While each sport is different in its own way, all of them represent St. Joe and builds character in the students by stressing Catholic values of fairness and good sportsmanship.

“A Catholic school system means family to me because it’s given me my best friends,” said Mary Hazel Bellan.

Bellan is a ninth-grade soccer player and

member of the Spirit Steppers dance team.

She has met many of her friends through the Catholic school system. She has been a part of the Catholic school system since attending pre-kindergarten at St. Richard Catholic School, one of three Catholic elementary schools whose graduates often attend St. Joe.

Bellan’s family has been in the Catholic school system for a years. All of her family members have had the opportunity to receive a Catholic education because St. Joe is located in Metro-Jackson.

St. Joe has offered students the opportunity to get “to God through knowledge” since the 1870s. Athletics have always been an important part of the school’s storied history.

The athletic program at St. Joe started when



students first played football in 1948. Since then, St. Joe has been competing against nearby schools.

When playing any sport against these schools,

St. Joe carries a standard because of its Catholic education. St. Joe’s teams pray before and after games asking God to help them play. Athletes thank God for the opportunity to play, as well.

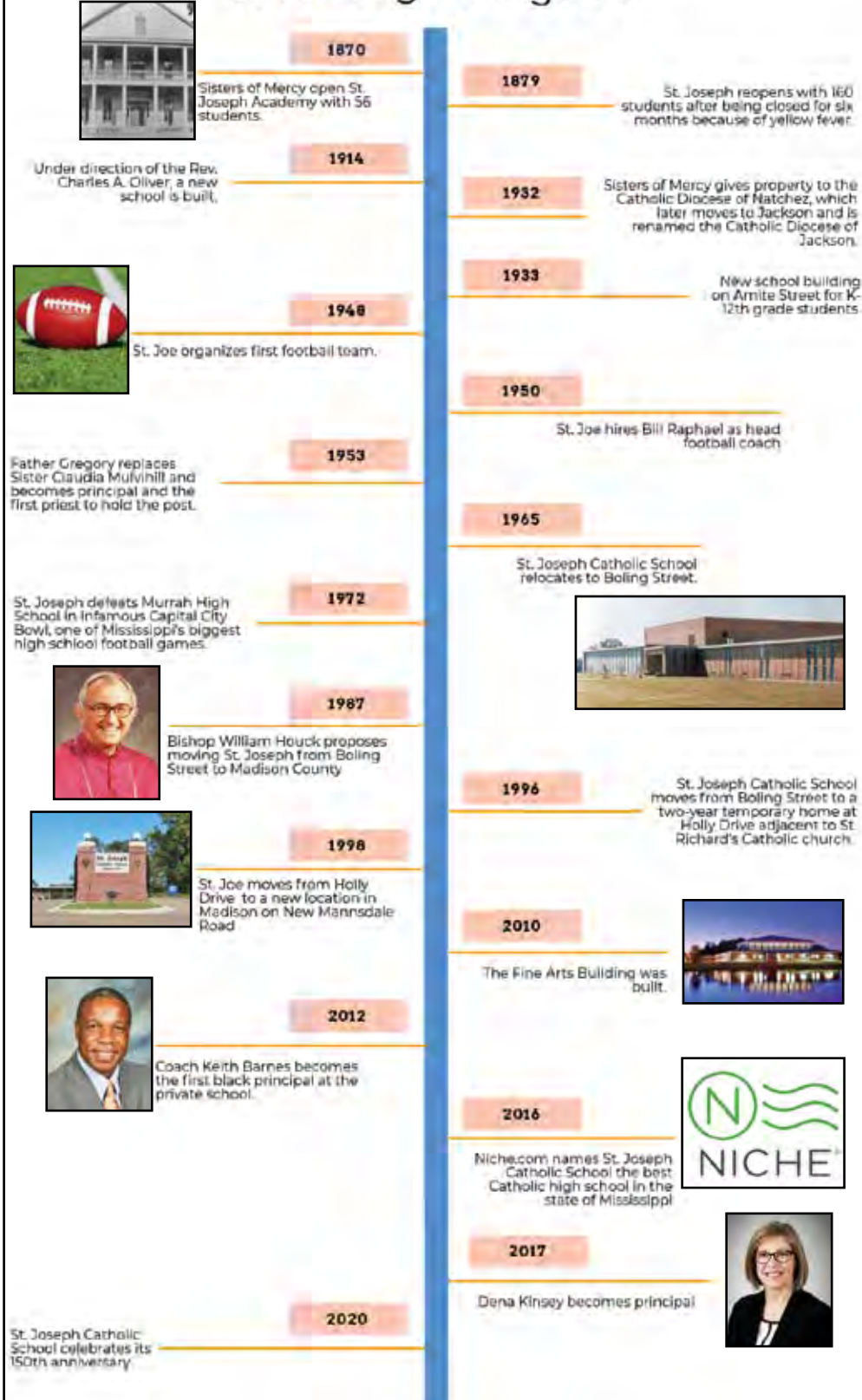
At events, teams participate with other teams in a nice manner that reflects how the coaches and faculty has taught them.

When prayer ends the school, as a community and whole, calls on St. Joseph, the school’s patron saint as a response. The school also calls on Mary, the mother of Christ, as our Lady of victory.

Athletes at St. Joe are trained to play hard. However, the athletes are taught to show their Catholic education during their games and after.

Mary Hazel Bellan says that to her, “The Catholic faith means putting Jesus first.”

### St. Joseph Catholic School ...through the years



Graphic by Amari Wells/The Bear Facts

### CATHOLIC FAITH, from page 1

Indeed, Catholic faith is the heart of St. Joe – from teaching Catholicism in theology classes to praying before each class to incorporating Catholic faith into other subjects

Even for non-Catholics, learning about the Catholic faith can be a benefit.

“There are many misconceptions or false beliefs that people have about Catholicism,” said Ms. Katherine Sckiets, a ninth grade English teacher and the campus minister.

“When students come here and they have to take religion classes with everything else – even if they never become Catholic – eventually they understand what our core beliefs are and they understand how we are similar to other denominations of Christianity,” she said.

Practicing and learning about Catholicism, isn’t limited to Theology class. St. Joe students pray at the beginning of every class and together as a school every day during the morning announcements. Students and faculty also attend weekly mass every Thursday.

Just this week, students celebrating St. Joe’s annual Grandparents and Sisters of Mercy Mass – acknowledging the important role grandparents role in their lives as well as honoring the Sisters of Mercy as founders of the school in 1870.

Another way to foster Catholic faith is through service to the community – a huge part of St. Joe with high school students are required to perform 30 hours of community service each

year and middle school students require to perform 20.

“Our service is important because our service is what God has called us as a church to do,” said Vicki Runnels, the senior religion teacher and the school’s alumni coordinator.

“In our service, we attain a relationship with (God) and that we have to treat one another with kindness, love and justice and we’re all working towards that same goal.”

With the closest other Catholic high school more than an hour away in Vicksburg, St. Joseph stands out from the crowd. While many other private schools draw Christian faith into their presence, none teach and develop the basic, fundamental beliefs of Catholicism.

“We want to educate the whole student,” said Ms. Sckiets, herself a 2012 graduate of St. Joe.

“We don’t want to just teach them the academic subjects that they can learn at any other school,” she said. “We want to give them a sense of Christian charity and learning about their Catholic faith.”

St. Joseph’s official motto is the Latin phrase “Ad Deum Per Scientiam.” Translated into English, the Latin phrase means: “To God through Knowledge.”

“It’s the feeling of belonging to something that’s bigger than yourself and knowing that you’re a part of that bigness in a really important way,” Mrs. Runnels said.



Photo by Bailey Miller/The Bear Facts

St. Joseph Catholic School students participated in a food drive during Catholic Schools Week. The drive will benefit the St. Vincent dePaul Society.



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## THE BEAR FACTS & BRUIN NEWS NOW SPECIAL REPORT: CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

As part of *The Bear Facts* coverage of Catholic Schools Week, we asked students at the three Jackson-area Catholic elementary schools – Sister Thea Bowman, St. Richard Catholic School and St. Anthony Catholic School – to submit a story about why they love their school and what it means to them.

### St. Richard Catholic School

## Family atmosphere makes school special

I love St. Richard Catholic School for many reasons. I love the family environment, teachers, specials and, of course, that we get to participate in Mass. Catholic education is a very important part of learning about our Catholic faith.



ANNIE MAC STECKLER

“I love the family environment, teachers, specials and, of course, that we get to participate in Mass.”

want to be treated no matter how different they are.

One of my favorite things is Catholic Schools Week when we celebrate our parish, community, vocations, faculty, staff, students, families and nation.

Another part of Catholic Schools Week is Newcomb, a game similar to volleyball that we play with the fifth- and sixth-graders. We get to play our teachers and parents. It is really fun and definitely my favorite part of Catholic Schools Week.

We use a “house system” at St. Richard. Each “house” is named after a different saint, and kids from all grades are in different houses. All siblings are in the same “house,” and we sit together at Mass and during assemblies.

We can get “house points” for doing good things and behaving at school and going the extra mile to help someone. At the end of the year, we do “house challenges” and one lucky “house” brings home the trophy.

Annie Mac Steckler is a student at St. Richard Catholic School in Jackson.

### Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School

## Community service helps those in need

I like Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School because it is a school where students excel and prophets are formed.



TALIA TILLISON

“This school is amazing. We learn to treat other students the way we like to be treated.”

This school is amazing. We learn to treat other students the way we would like to be treated.

The students work together to get the work done. Team work is important. It builds our character learning to see the views of others.

Our teachers inspire us to do our best. They stay on us about being the best that we can be every day. Since there are a small number of students in each class, this allows each teacher to have the opportunity to help us one-on-one. The caring that is shown by the teachers and our principal is what our school is all about.

The extracurricular activities are great, too. I am a member of the choir, liturgical dance team, cheerleading squad, and Student Council.

I really like the community service activities here at our school. We have collected and donated canned foods, clothes, water and other items to those in need. I love it when we serve others.

I love it when we are the ones who have to serve breakfast to our grandparents on Grandparent’s Day. Serving others is really stressed at our school.

Learning about God is really important, too. We attend Mass once a week. I love to sing, but

I really like Mass because we are all together listening to the Word of God.

There are a million things you can name about this wonderful school. When you put it all together, the students working together to find the perfect solution to a problem is good.

When you can’t find a solution, you can just discuss it with each other. We take field trips on the things we have studied in class to help us.

All of these things are important to me because as a child of God, I want to learn more and help others learn to make things better. My goal is to finish school and become a Pastor to help and serve others. This is important because I would like to be more like Jesus.

I thank my parents for sending me here. At Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School, I am getting a good foundation in academics and Gospel values.

Talia Tillison is a sixth-grader at Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School in Jackson.

### St. Anthony Catholic School

## STREAM one way St. Anthony sets itself apart

Being an STA Eagle is very important to me.



ADRIANNA TERRAZAS

“When you have a small class, then your teacher can teach you things more thoroughly.”

It means going to school with kind and thoughtful students and teachers. It also means learning things that are boring to us kids, in a fun, hands-on way by using STREAM (also known as Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics).

By having teachers that are statewide and nationally recognized, we learn in ways that no other schools can.

An example of learning with STREAM was when the sixth grade conducted a force-in-action project with Mrs. Vicki Moorehead. Mrs. Moorehead won the 2016 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics

and Science Teaching.

We were learning about forces and motion, so we were assigned groups to build catapults and slingshots to throw paint onto a big canvas.

Mr. Aaron Burns, a civil engineer, and Mr. Robert Burrell, a mechanical engineer from Entergy Nuclear, came to help us troubleshoot our machines.

We drilled, hammered and sawed until the class period was over. Then we had paint day, which was when we tested all of the catapults

and slingshots. All of them were successful.

Prayer & Pledge is something that makes us unique from other schools.

Every morning, the whole school goes to the gymnasium.

Mr. Jim Bell, the St. Anthony principal, reads the daily scripture. Then we say “The Lord’s Prayer” prayer, the “Pledge of Allegiance” and the “Eagle Pledge.”

The “Eagle Pledge” states: Today...

*I Will Entrust Myself to God*

*I Will Act With Honor and Respect*

*I Will Use God’s Gifts to Serve Others*

*I Will Love as God Loves Me*

*I Will Strive for Excellence in All I Do.*

As you can see, the letters in bold clearly state EAGLES. Every morning the whole school says the pledge with their right hand held up, like they’re saying an oath.

Something else that sets us apart from other schools is that we are a small school, which leads to small classes.

When you have a small class, then your teacher can teach you things more thoroughly. When you don’t understand new skills, your teacher shows you different ways to learn and remember.

You get to know your teachers very well, and your friends are like your own siblings.

“When I graduate in May, I know I will be able to spread my wings and FLY like a St. Anthony Eagle.”

Another special tradition that we have is Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. We also have All-School mass once a month, and we also have chapel masses once a month. We can also go into the chapel and pray whenever we want to.

I like going to mass on Holy Days of Obligation, like All Saints’ Day and Ash Wednesday. I love God, and I want to have a strong relationship with Him. St. Anthony helps me do that.

St. Anthony is a great school in so many different ways. All the students who have graduated and currently attend St. Anthony love it very much. When I graduate in May, I know that I will be able to spread my wings, and FLY like a St. Anthony Eagle.

Adrianna Terrazas attends St. Anthony Catholic School in Madison.

## Wissel: Nothing like teaching at a Catholic school and St. Joe

By ALLIE MILNER  
*The Bear Facts*

As the longest serving member of the faculty at St. Joe. Coach David Wissel has seen and experienced a lot. The longtime theology teacher and track coach recently met with *The Bear Facts* and talked about his experiences as a Bruin.

**The Bear Facts: How did you end up at St. Joe?**

**Coach Dave Wissel:** I was in Dallas Texas and I was unemployed. I had been let go from a steel inside sales job. I got a call from the St. Joe principal at the time, and he offered me the teaching job because I have a theology degree.

My mother-in-law had asked about the job because she knew I needed another job. He offered the job on the spot. My wife went to St. Joe and would always joke about me teaching there. It is just really ironic that I ended up here.

**The Bear Facts: What made you pick a Catholic school over others?**

**Coach Wissel:** My total education experience has been at Catholic schools, from elementary to undergraduate. I’ve never experienced anything else, and I have really good experiences.

**The Bear Facts: What has kept you at St. Joe so long?**

**Coach Wissel:** I like the atmosphere of the school. I really enjoy the small-school setting and most of my education was Catholic. This school is co-ed unlike my schooling. I really like the people, from the students to the parents and the other teachers.

**The Bear Facts: What makes**



DAVE WISSEL  
theology teacher

**Catholic education unique?**

**Coach Wissel:**

It’s the groundwork of what Jesus taught us. It teaches us to be open and live a full life. Prayer is very important, especially throughout my life. At a Catholic school you get the opportunity to

go to Mass and pray and practice your faith. There is also a family atmosphere.

**The Bear Facts: What is your favorite part of being a Catholic school teacher?**

**Coach Wissel:** I can practice my religion openly and through my faith can help somebody who may be struggling. It shows that my actions impacted someone when they come back and say that my actions have impacted them.

**The Bear Facts: What’s your fondest memory at St. Joseph?**

**Coach Wissel:** My fondest memories would be the seven champion-

“At a Catholic school you get the opportunity to go to Mass and pray and practice your faith.”

– Dave Wissel,  
teacher and coach



Photo by Grant Murphy/The Bear Facts

David Wissel teaches one of his religion classes this week at St. Joseph Catholic School. Wissel teaches theology and also coaches track and cross country. He is the longest-serving faculty member currently working at St. Joseph.

ships in soccer, that was really fun. Coaching in the all star games was cool too. I also really appreciated the support I’ve gotten recently when one of my family members passed away.

**The Bear Facts: What is it like to see and teach families and generations of students?**

**Coach Wissel:** That’s really interesting. I’m waiting for the grandchildren to come through. Teaching siblings is interesting because no two are alike. It’s interesting to see parents and how they are like and different from their parents. Each child is different and a gift. Watching someone start as a fresh-

man and end a senior is really interesting and the growth they experience.

**The Bear Facts: What do you plan to do once you retire?**

**Coach Wissel:** I want to travel and see places I haven’t seen in the U.S. and abroad especially Rome – (and) also to see my daughter and grandchild.

## 'Spider-Man' tops list of best films

As we enter 2018, let's take a look back at the top 10 films of 2017.



Caleb Welch  
entertainment  
editor

### No. 1: "Spider-Man: Homecoming."

The movie serves as a reboot of the entire Spider-Man mythos while firmly establishing the character into the Marvel cinematic universe.

This movie has a lot of great action and humor. And the villain is great. Every time this man is on the screen, I was captivated.

And the last great thing about this film is the Easter eggs to the comics. This provides a great distraction for longtime Spider-Man fans and comic buffs.

No. 2: "Wonder." I love this film

so much. This film is adapted from the book of the same name and is responsible of creating #bekind movement. You could even say it's a wonderful film. This film has a great overall message for people of all ages.

I also love how "Star Wars" references are included in the movie – some more blatantly than others. This is a great film to see with the family.

No. 3: "Wonder Woman." This film definitely shakes up a few things in the film world. Gal Gadot shine in the role of the Amazon warrior. The role is perfect for her because she plays a warrior on screen and was one in real life.

This film provides a great role model for girls of all ages. The movie also shows DC movies can actually be good.

No. 4: "Star Wars Episode 8: The Last Jedi." Despite some of the

shortcomings of this film, there is still a lot to enjoy about it. The movie continues the main saga and furthers the plot. It also has epic actions scenes such as the throne room fight and the epic kamikaze run by Admiral Holo.

This film is the last appearance of Carrie Fisher before her death. She was instrumental in helping form this film.

I also love how this film wasn't afraid to play it safe and tell the traditional "Star Wars" story and not continue the plot threads from "The Force Awakens."

No. 5: "Beauty and the Beast." This is a great live-action remake of the classic Disney animated film. Lots of time and energy was put into this film to make it what it is.

Both classic songs return and new songs are added. The acting is really well done. I particularly liked Gaston

and LeFou. This is another great film for the family to see.

No. 6: "Dunkirk." This is a classic Christopher Nolan film told from three different perspectives. They are told from the men on the beach, the lone spitfire in the air, and the men who worked to evacuate the soldiers via ships.

This is not your typical war film and actually portrays the horrors of war. It takes place on the actual location of the evacuation of Dunkirk and also period planes and ships are used in the film.

No. 7: "Bright." This Netflix original film has a very unique fantasy premise that also provides social commentary.

The action sequences in the film are well done and thrilling. The film has a ton of lore. And the film has already been given the go-ahead for a sequel.

No. 8: "The Greatest Showman."

This is a totally original musical with an all-star cast that includes Hugh Jackman, Zenyatta and others. Also this film has a great selection of songs that have become instant classics.

No. 9: "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales." This film continues the "Pirates of the Caribbean" series with much of the original cast. The film continues the hilarious hijinks that has been with the series since the beginning.

No. 10: "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2." This film continues to set up the Marvel Cinematic Universe and the "Guardians" franchise.

There are a lot of epic battles in this movie. The inclusion of Baby Groot provided some of the most funny and touching moments in the film. And everything involving Yondu was great in this film.

## 'The Post': Film highlights role of media

By CALEB WELCH  
The Bear Facts

### REVIEW

Recently I went with my journalism class on a school field trip to see the new Steven Spielberg film "The Post."

The movie chronicles *The Washington Post's* efforts to expose how the U.S. government lied to the American people about our nation's involvement in the Vietnam War. There were several things that I liked and disliked about the film.

First off let's start with what I liked. One of the big aspects the film has is its star power with both Tom Hanks and Meryl Streep sharing top billing. Both give incredible performances

and bring the historical figures they play to life. I must give special nod to Streep's work in the film as Katherine Graham, owner of the *Post*.

The second aspect I loved about the movie was the overall sense of tension. The movie almost plays like a game of cat-and-mouse between the *Post* and the government. Each side in the movie wins and loses.

You would be forgiven if you thought you were watching a horror movie or action thriller thanks to the feeling of dread and suspense.

The third thing I liked about the

**“The film almost plays like a game of cat-and-mouse between the Post and the government.”**

was the ending. I will not be spoil the movie, but just let me say that with this kind of film there is an expected type of ending. But once that scene happened I was thoroughly surprised and immediately couldn't stop thinking about how clever the ending was.

The fourth thing I liked about the

film was about how relevant this film is in modern times. While I was sitting in the theater watching this film I couldn't stop thinking about the parallels to the current administration in regards about how they treat the press.

You have a presidential figure who works to undermine the press who are trying to expose the truth about to the American people. Now say what you might about that, but I believe in the end that is a good thing to think about while in the film.

With those points out of the way let me discuss some of the things I did not like about the film. At points, I couldn't understand what was going on. By the end of the film it should be

clear what is going on, but otherwise the film is confusing.

However this provides a great platform for people to go back and educate themselves on the event that transpired in the film.

The second thing that I did not like ties back into the first aspect I talked about. I did not like how they were not on screen text cards explaining what was going on. This would do a lot to clarify what was going on in some scenes.

The last thing I did not like about this movie was that it was long. Overall I enjoyed this film.

## Two big 'Star Wars' books were the best of 2017

By CALEB WELCH  
The Bear Facts

There were many books in released in 2017. While I loved reading many of those books over the year, two stood out: "Star Wars: Thrawn" and "Star Wars: From a Certain Point of View."

Both claim my spot for best books of 2017. "Star Wars: Thrawn" was written by Timothy Zahn. One of the most obvious things I love about this book is that it reintroduces this fan-favorite character into the official "Star Wars"

canon.

The second thing I love about this book is that it shows the "Star Wars" universe through an Imperial perspective. I can't stress it enough about how much I love stories detailing the daily operations of the Empire and the men and women who run it.

I also love how this book shows how there are noble imperials and not everyone in the Empire is just cartoonishly evil.

The third thing I love about this book is that it is a detective story at heart. The opponent that Thrawn faces is essentially the "Star Wars"

equivalent to "Star Wars" Moriarty and his companion is his Watson.

For those who don't know one of the major tenets of Thrawn's character is that he studies species' cultures to determine how they will respond to any given situation, and he uses this information to out-smart his opponents.

The fourth thing I love about this book is that this story is a underdog story. From the start, Thrawn has to face corrupt politics and the discrimination of the mainstream Empire due to the fact he is an alien.

He continues to gain power and the respect of his superiors with his renegade tactics, and you can't help but cheer the guy on. His companion, Eli Vance, also has to go through this same struggle – except he faces discrimination due to the fact he is from wild space.

The last thing that I love about the book is that there is already a confirmed sequel for this book called "Star Wars: Alliance" that features a

team up between Thrawn and Darth Vader that releases next summer.

"Star Wars: From a Certain Point of View" is an anthology of 40 short stories written by both veteran and new writers. Because of that, the stories are written in a variety of styles and genres.

The second thing I love about this book is that it fills many of the plot holes in "Star Wars: A New Hope" (Episode 4) or provides more content provided to the universe.

The whole point of the book is to allow these stories to tell the story of "A New Hope" from the perspectives of the other background characters in the "Star Wars" universe.

The third thing I love about this book is that it was written to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the release of "A New Hope" in theaters, so the book becomes a collectors item in a way.

Hopefully, the rest of the "Star Wars" films with get anthology books detailing their stories.

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JOSHUA 24:15

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## FRIERSON, from page 8

serves as the county seat and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The colorful Georgia courthouse dominates the center of town and the city's historic shopping district. "In Canton, they say if you play sports, (then you play) for your city and your family, and never forget where you came from," Trey said. Growing up in Canton and playing sports as a youth helped Trey develop a strong work ethic that has ultimately led to success in St. Joe's academic classes and varsity sports.

"Trey's a really smart kid, so he picks up on things fast," said Mike Howell, the Bruins' head basketball coach.

"He hasn't played basketball since he was in the eighth grade," Coach Howell said. "So for him to pick up on things so fast is a testament

“For him to pick up on things so fast is a testament to what type of kid he is and what type of work ethic he has.”

– Mike Howell,  
Bruins basketball coach

to what type of kid he is and what type of work ethic he has.”

While Trey has done well in basketball, his football and baseball action has attracted interest from community colleges. In fact, Trey plans to play baseball at Cophiah-Lincoln Community College next year.

Meanwhile, as the Bruin baseball season quickly approaches, Trey, his teammates and his coaches have high hopes for him as well as the Bruin team. They hope to build on the success from the 2017 season.

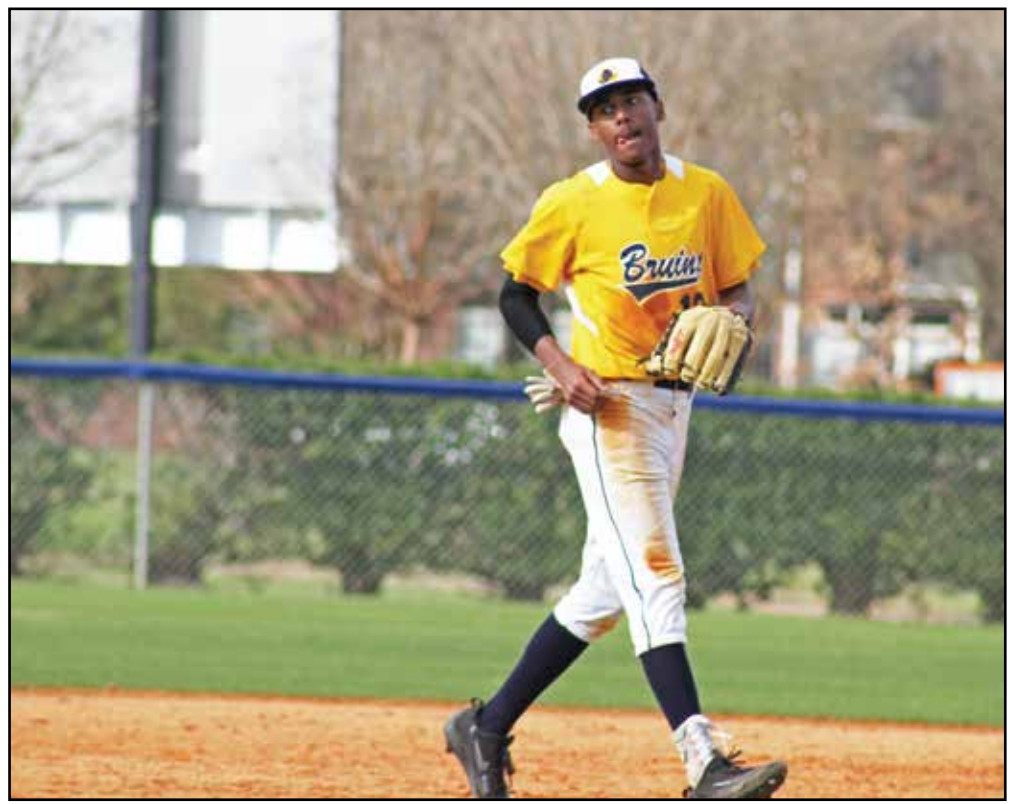


Bruin fans and players watched Trey step up to the plate at Loyd Star late that Saturday afternoon. The Bruins fought too hard to lose in the top of the seventh inning. They had to keep the dream alive.

Trey swung. In a sudden, quick blur, he slammed the ball to the left field fence, advanced to third base, drove in three runs and put the Bruins in front.

While the Bruins ultimately lost the game in the bottom of the seventh, Trey and his teammates gave it their all. I know. I was there.

As Trey reached third after hitting the triple, he stood quietly in place. He remained calm, hands on his hips, a smile on his face – and his mom's bracelet on his wrist.



File photo/The Bear Facts  
St. Joseph Catholic School baseball player Trey Frierson in the outfield during the 2017 baseball season. Frierson, a senior this year, is expected to play a critical role on the Bruins' 2018 squad.

## Holy Rollers spare no one

from staff reports

The St. Joe Holy Rollers bowling teams have wrapped up their regular seasons and played the district tournament Tuesday – with the girls taking first place, the boys taking second and both heading to state.

Under the direction of first-year boys coach Max Holman, the boys has rolled through opponents. Practicing two to three times a week for two hours at Fannin Lanes in Brandon, the team has learned a lot of bowling strategies and theory in order to improve their performance.

The team has been led by senior bowler Nick Zouboukos and junior Gage Douglas. Both have lead the team in practice and matches with a season average of 132 and season high of 177 for Zouboukos and a 112 season average for Douglass with a high score of 153.

Zouboukos averaged 165 against Florence

on Jan. 22. After beating powerhouse teams like Raymond and Florence early in the season, the team had some set backs again Cleveland County – one of the best teams in the state.

When it came to district play, the boys beat McLaurin twice and Mississippi School of the Deaf once.

The Holy Roller girls team is under the direction of longtime Coach Dennis Dillon. Under his direction, the girls team practiced alongside the boys at Fannin Lanes.

The girls have practiced consistency and shot-making for two hour practices. Led by Ava Hilton, a sophomore, the teams out-scored many opponents.

Hilton, averaging 119 on the season, is leading the team with consistency and a season high score of 166. The senior leader of the team, Leah Blevins, has really encouraged each player to play as best they can and accepts any and every player.

## BASKETBALL, from page 8

The dynamic Watson triple combo has propelled the Bruins into a hot streak that's left opponents wondering what happened. They share the same last name – but are not related.

"We lost some games early to some good teams," Cameron Watson said, "but so far we've been improving every day. So, we've been able to win some big games."

Part of the success of the team is no doubt due to the excellent players. The team has received excellent contributions from numerous players; a lot of the credit for the success is thanks to first-year Coach Mike Howell.

"Playing these 5A and 6A schools that are good . . . we'll be prepared," Coach Howell said. "A lot of teams will schedule weak in the beginning of the season, so they'll be shell-shocked whenever they play against a really athletic team. I wanted our guys to be prepared for the playoffs."

The playoffs are right around the corner. And for the Bruins, the hot spell could not have come at a better time. Now is when teams gear up for the rigorous competition they'll face in the postseason.

In the postseason, experience and staying cool under pressure come into play in a huge way. It's then that seniors like Cam and Gabe Watson, Trey Frierson, and Hayden Bryce will

“We lost some games early to some good teams, but so far we've been improving every day. So, we've been able to win some big games.”

– Cameron Watson,  
Bruin basketball player

have to lead the otherwise extremely young team.

As for now, the Bruins still have a couple of key district games that could determine seeding for the postseason. The Bruins play Pelahatchie Feb. 6 and Pisgah Feb. 9.

The Bruins look to carry their moment into postseason play and the district tournament on Feb. 13, 15 and 16, which the Bruins will host.

## MISSISSIPPI'S AWARD-WINNING HIGH SCHOOL NEWSCAST



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## SOCCER, from page 8

Grant Murphy, a senior goalie, said the "senior boys and myself try to set a good example for the younger kids and almost act like older brothers to them. We also try to coach them and help them with their skills."

Longtime Coach Dwayne Denim leads the team. St. Joe's most recent soccer state championship came under him in 2015 with the girls' team.

Denim is a knowledgeable coach who knows what to do when put in tough situation.

The boys open playoffs Feb. 6 against Strayhorn. The team hopes to eventually meet St. Andrews for the North State championship.

"We're feeling good and playing with confidence right now and everyone believes we

can win state," Reed Collins said.

The Bruins would have to make it through the first and second rounds to reach to North State. A win there would put the Bruins in the state championship in Clinton.

On the other hand, the Lady Bruins are 7-7-1 heading into the playoffs where they will square-off against Strayhorn.

The girls team is led by seniors like Allie Milner and Emma Dotson. Underclassmen with experience include Bailey Miller, Riley Wolf and Leah Murphy; they also have also contributed a great deal to the team this season.

Soccer has produced another great year this year. It's not over yet for both teams as they soon travel the road to state.



File photo/The Bear Facts  
The St. Joe girls soccer team plays on campus at Bill Raphael Field.



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Good Luck Bruins!

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#### UPCOMING GAMES

■ **FEB. 6:** Bruins-Pelahatchie  
 ■ **FEB. 9:** Bruins-Puckett

### SOFTBALL READY TO START SEASON



The softball team is ready for the 2018 season, and already has been preparing for games.

The Bruins will be led by first-year head coach Meggan Windham, who has high expectations for her team.

### SOCCER CELEBRATES SENIOR NIGHT



The boys and girls teams were victorious on Senior Night Jan. 25 against McLaurin.

The boys currently have a record of 16-4 overall, 4-2 in district play. The girls are 8-7-1 overall and 2-1 in district play.

With the playoffs approaching, both teams are hopeful they can make deep postseason runs, if not taking home the State Championship.

## Bruin soccer teams eye postseason

By **ANDREW SANLI**  
*The Bear Facts*

With the 2017-2018 soccer season winding down, the boys team has looked as impressive as ever.

With a 14-4 record, the boys resemble great Bruin teams from the early 2000s – the same teams that won four consecutive state championships.

Currently, the Bruins are ranked 15th in the state and have had some impressive wins against 6A

competition.

The team shutout George County 1-0 and beat Pearl 2-1. The Bruins have had a few tough losses this year. Two came at the hands of arch-rival St. Andrew's, who won a tough game at home in early December.

Most recently, the Saints won a



REED COLLINS



JACK LEDOUX

controversial rematch. Two of 6A's top competitors, Clinton and Northwest Rankin were, too much for the Bruins.

Senior leadership has been huge this year. While underclassmen have contributed, the seniors are the heart and soul of the team. Seniors Reed

Collins, Grant Murphy, Jack LeDoux and B.J. Dorsey have served as the core of the team.

Collins is the leading scorer with 24 goals; Grant Murphy is the goalie.

"The seniors have been true leaders this season, and we've gotten really close this year. They've been great on and off the field," said sophomore Reed Fry.

See **SOCCER** Page 7

## Kings of the court



*Under Coach Mike Howell, the boys basketball team is on a roll heading into postseason play – and there's no sign they are slowing down*

Sports analysis by Joe Pearson

**A**fter one month into the second semester, the Bruin boys basketball team remains undefeated in district play heading into February.

In recent weeks, the boys have heated up in magnificent fashion, dominating any competition in their way.

Behind the brilliant play of point guard Gabe Watson, who is among the leading scorers in the state, the Bruins have out-scored their district opponents 435-263.

They also have received excellent play from junior Douglas Watson, a shooting guard. In addition, senior center Cameron Watson has provided a strong post presence – protecting the rim for the Bruins.

See **BASKETBALL**, Page 7



**ABOVE:** Nic Bolden scores a lay-up in St. Joseph's 68-66 overtime victory against Jackson Academy in the "Rumble in the South" tournament.

**MAIN PHOTO:** Gabe Watson pulls up for a deep 3-point shot in St. Joseph's overtime victory against Jackson Academy in the "Rumble in the South" tournament on Jan. 15.

Photos by Olivia Patterson/The Bear Facts

## Trey Frierson shaped by life-changing challenges

**T**hings looked bleak for the St. Joe baseball team.

The Bruins, facing a hostile crowd at Loyd Star Attendance Center, were down 8-6 with two outs at the top of the final inning of the final game of the South State championship.

Junior Trey Frierson was at bat, facing a three-ball, two-strike count and one more pitch that could throw the game to Loyd Star.

Hundreds of St. Joe fans traveled to Brookhaven that Saturday, May 13, for the winner-take-all matchup against Loyd Star. The Bruins lost Game 1 on the road days earlier, but won Game 2 at home – setting up this pivotal contest.

I leaned on the rail of the shabby dugout, the warm late-spring wind whipping across my face while the



JOE PEARSON  
sports editor

sun beat down on the field. I chewed nervously on a dwindling supply of sunflower seeds.

Mud and grass stained Trey's blue-and-white, pin-striped baseball jersey as he stepped in the batter's box, calmly eyed the pitcher and waited for the most important throw of the game and the 2017 baseball season.

Jimmy Frierson III, or "Trey" as everyone calls him, was born in Canton on June 7, 1999. Trey had always been an exceptional athlete, dominating Canton youth sports in football, basketball and baseball.

But seven years ago, Trey faced something much bigger than the pressures of any athletic event. Trey lost his mother, Monique, who passed away in November 2010 after years of fighting breast cancer.

Trey was in the sixth grade.

*“He has overcome some tremendous obstacles in his life, and those have helped him make it to where he is today.”*

– Grant Murphy,  
St. Joe senior

"That's my drive, you know, to make my mom happy, my grandma and my dad happy," he said recently.

Of the many special memories he has, Christmas 2009 stands out the most – the last one he spent with his mom. Trey will never forget sharing the day with his parents and siblings.

"The passing of my mom is the most important things of my life,"

Trey said, fidgeting with a pink bracelet on his wrist.

His mother once wore the bracelet; now he wears it as reminder of her.

"It (his mom's death) changed me . . . but it definitely made me stronger as a person," Trey said. "It made me and my friends closer."

#### Great friends

One such friend is fellow senior Grant Murphy. The two are so close, in fact, that Trey even sent Grant's mom, Danielle, a Mother's Day card one year.

"He has overcome some tremendous obstacles in his life, and those have helped him make it to where he is today," Grant said. "Trey is one of the few athletes you find that will stop at nothing to excel, no matter what happens."

Trey has undoubtedly made his mom – and his dad and his grandmother – happy.

He led the Bruin baseball team in hits last year while playing shortstop. As the Bruin's star wide receiver last fall, Trey had 44 receptions for almost 900 yards and 10 touchdowns.

This year, for the first time since middle school, Trey decided to play basketball. He simply wanted to make his senior year as memorable as possible.

But if you ask Trey anything about his high school career at St. Joe, his answer is always the same: "My biggest accomplishment is being an all 'A' student."

#### Intangible qualities

Trey has the "it factor" – that intangible, indescribable quality that makes him stand out from the rest. Maybe it's because of what he has gone through personally. Or maybe it's because he's from Canton.

The small Madison County city

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