



# Travel writer Rick Steves comes to Brevard College

**Madeleine Pollock**  
Staff Writer

On Tuesday afternoon, renowned travel writer, activist and television personality Rick Steves stopped by Tornado Alley for a question and answer interview with students and faculty before his sold-out speech “Travel as a Political Act” that he would deliver that same evening at the Porter Center.

Steves, 69 of Seattle, has been traveling ever since high school when he realized that he could make a business out of it. Topics from his discussion included his background, the idea of transformative travel, common mistakes made by tourists and tips for more gratifying travel. He says that his “mission is to inspire Americans to travel beyond Orlando.”

According to his speech, Steves’ travel journey began when he first went to Europe with his father, a piano teacher, to visit piano factories in Germany and the Netherlands. He quickly fell in love with travel, and realized that there were common mistakes that tourists make, causing travel to become less enjoyable.

Steves said, “When I get ripped off, I celebrate... I’m going to learn that scam and bring it home,” to prevent others from making the same errors. He has published 50 books and over 150 TV episodes covering different European countries, which appears to be his area of expertise. In addition to this, he leads 30,000 people on tours around Europe every year.

Steves touched upon the idea of transformative travel, which he de-

scribed as a sort of deliberate culture shock. He said, “Culture shock is why you travel... it just needs to be curated.” He quantified successful travel not as how many places a person has visited, but as how many people they have met.

An example he gave of culture shock is when he spoke about how travel has altered his perception of wealth. He said that “10 percent of the planet lives in extreme poverty on \$2 a day or less” and that “wealthy and blind in the ethical problem.” Steves then quoted Thomas Jefferson, saying, “Traveling makes men wiser, but less happy.”

After this, Steves’ transitioned to talk about travel mistakes and tips. He said that the number one mistake he sees is “not planning or having the proper info.” He followed this by saying, “A guidebook is a \$20 tool for a \$3000 experience.”

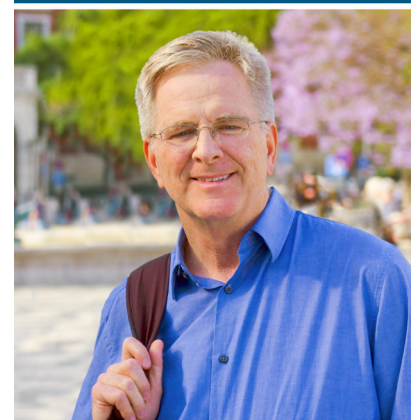
Steves’ tips for success were about time management; he said, “Time is as limited and precious as a resource of your money” and “assume you will return.” Steves suggested focusing on the depth of experiences over the quantity, and to plan more than one visit.

Near the end of the discussion, Steves said that he “learns more about home from looking at it from a distance” and “when you travel the best souvenir you bring home is a passion for building bridges instead of walls.” He also said, “You can travel as a tourist, as a traveler and as a pilgrim. The road can be a playground, it can be a school, or it can be church.”

Steves’ travel experiences, guidebooks, TV series, and more information about him at [ricksteves.com](http://ricksteves.com).



Travel writer Rick Steves spoke to a group of students, faculty and staff in Tornado Alley on Tuesday afternoon. Steves was on campus for the McDowell Lecture Series, a ticketed event sponsored by the college and the Transylvania County Library. (Photo by John Padgett)



Since 2000 Rick Steves has hosted “Rick Steves’ Europe,” a popular travel show on PBS.

# New Course LNC 220 Conspiracy theories in history and media focus of new LINC class on 'Lies we tell ourselves'

**Zoe Hughes**  
Staff Writer

Brevard College debuted a brand new LNC course this fall; LNC 220, Lies We Tell Ourselves: Conspiracy Theories in History and Media. Taught by Dr. Charles W Ecenbarger and Professor Cagney Lee Guest, this course will explore “the landscape of conspiracy theories and myths.” It will cover a broad range of topics throughout the semester, “from Bigfoot to the Covid-19 pandemic.”

LNC 220 will not merely parse through different conspiracy theories and discuss their origins or why people believe them, nor will the class be “Myth Busters” and dismantle and debunk these theories.

The goal is to teach students how to think critically about misinformation. This course aims to build students’ sense of verisimilitude through analyzing conspiracy theories.

“We don’t want to teach you what to think, but we want to help you learn how to think...” - Cagney Lee Guest

This class was highly anticipated by staff and students alike. Throughout the semester, there will be guest lecturers to provide additional insight into the wide range of subjects. Some of these guests include Dr. Ross Veatch-Peterson from Hesston College, who has his PhD in Folklore. Brevard College’s very own Dr. Jordan Kuck and Dr. Sharad Creasman are also among those who will speak in the class.

Lies We Tell Ourselves: Conspiracy Theories in History and Media will include some unique graded projects. An assignment titled “Watching the Watchers” will require the student to explore and analyze the YouTube algorithm. This provides an opportunity for the students to see how the internet plays a role in the formation of conspiracy theories, and the significance of online echo chambers.

A later project created by Ecenbarger and Guest is the “Survival Guide”. The general idea of this assignment is for students to create a guide that helps them navigate conspiracy theories and misinformation. This guide will help them determine which information is valuable or not.

The class total comes to a resounding forty-two students, making it one of the largest classes in Brevard College’s History. This is likely due to the anticipation, but also due to the passion of the instructors. They reportedly spent all summer prepping and discussing the details and logistics of LNC 220. Both professors have high hopes for the future of this course, including being able to regularly offer the class in upcoming semesters.

“Students are leaving class and I’m sitting in my office, and I hear them still talking about the [topic]... that feels good.” – Charles W Ecenbarger

There has been a lot of care and thought put into the creation of this course. It is still too early to tell if this new course will be successful or not, but I do believe I am not alone when I say that I look forward to the evolution and growth of LNC 220 over the semester, and hopefully, the coming years.

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# SGA wants to know Let SGA know your suggestions, concerns

**Autumn Jones**  
Managing Editor

As you may have heard, the Brevard Caf has a new manager. A new manager means new food options and opportunities. In the recent SGA meeting, representatives discussed ways to attain feedback about the new options and students’ opinions.

SGA decided they wanted to create a Google Form for students to learn their opinions and even gain suggestions on what they want to eat.

On the form, the questions might look a little as follows:

Overall, are you satisfied with the caf food? Are you happy with the amount of options? How many times per week do you eat elsewhere

because the caf does not have an option satisfactory to you? What can the caf do better? What is the caf doing well? And, What kinds of food options would you like to see? Please be specific (i.e Chicken bacon ranch pasta).

Be on the lookout for the link in both BC Radar and the SGA Instagram, [@brevardcollegesga](https://www.instagram.com/brevardcollegesga).

SGA is also introducing a suggestions box. Every other Thursday in the caf between 11:00 and 1:00, SGA will be hosting “Blue Thursdays”- If you wear blue to show your love for BC, or leave a suggestion in the suggestion box, you receive a prize! SGA will have a suggestion box out, where you are more than welcome to add any suggestions or concerns you may have!

# Alyse Bensel releases new poetry collection: 'Spoil'

## "Social media is what you make of it"

Olivia Hyde  
Editor in Chief

I got the opportunity to interview Alyse Bensel on her newly published book "Spoil." This newly released book was written in parallel with her dissertation during her PhD.

"I was doing a very research heavy book of poems which became my first public published poetry collection 'Rare Wondrous Things' and I needed a bit of a brain break, so I decided to start working on these poems that were less about persona and research and more about working in a confessional mode," she said.

Writing this book was "more to personal experience and also as a way to process a tumultuous friendship at the time that mostly was happening in online spaces." The book also speaks on the early stages of an underly medical issue that was not properly diagnosed. The book helped

Bensel with some of the frustrations that went with that.

This is not her first book that became published. I wanted to know how this book is different from her dissertation. Whereas the poems in her dissertation "were very much about a particular historical figure and kind of trying to re-animate and interrogate her life," Bensel said the poems in "Spoil" touch on the similar subject matter about women's agency and autonomy.

"Spoil" addresses things like women's health issues, navigating relationships, social media, and social environments. I can tell there was a lot of passion and emotion in this new book because she said her book is meant to leave a "bite."

For those of you who don't know who Alyse Bensel is, she is a professional writer as well as English professor here at Brevard College. I was previously in her ENG 251 class "Forms and Theories of Creative Writing," and I really enjoyed myself. We got to work on a semester-long research project, and I also did a historical piece on Frida Kahlo.

I found her experience writing her historical dissertation very relatable. So I wanted to know how it was for her to fully express herself in a piece instead of telling the life of another person.

Bensel said for other writes it could be useful to find a "flow state."

"Be able to get into that space where you're really occupying the world of the poem," she said. "Also, give yourself time to return to that again and again and make that feel more like an art form rather than 'oh this is just something I have to do.'"

The motivation for and act of writing can vary from day to day, she said. "Some

days it's gonna feel really practical and every day, and then other days it's just gonna feel a lot more magical and intuitive," she said.

Most important, though, is to keep at it.

I wanted to know what it is like looking back on her now published book.

"The way I was feeling about these poems when I was first writing them and maybe when they first appeared in literary journals is very different from the feeling that I have now," Bensel said. Nearly a decade of time has elapsed between that first draft and then revision and publication.

She says sometimes as writers we may look at an older piece and go, "Ohhh, that's how I was approaching that really difficult situation at the time. You can also understand that it was commenting on a specific time in place." So the focus should be on "just preserving that in a certain way and every time you come back to it with new experiences, it's gonna feel different." I thought that was a beautiful way of explaining that feeling that may come with looking at an older piece of your work.

She said she found herself, during the writing process, ruminating on certain subject matters like the social construct of "the right body" and the objectification of women. She says the female body can really come under scrutiny in all of these ways that become very harmful for us.

"Also I was thinking about the effects of social media" while writing the poems in the book, Bensel said. The growing popularity of Instagram in particular was something she took notice of.

"Instagram was starting to become a hub for manipulation to look a certain way and also that feeling of you'll never quite look exactly how society wants you to look," she recalls. So you will find many poems that point out things like how people use social media. In this book she wants to convey that "social media can offer us beautiful and wonderful things but can also create chaos: you get to choose."

Anyone interested in buying your own copy may do so at Highland Books right here in downtown Brevard. You can also purchase it online anywhere books are sold. "Spoil" is available now in both hardback and paperback.



# Alumni Profile: Brady Penn

**DeVon Taylor**  
Staff Writer

Brady Penn. I'm pretty sure you've heard this name before in Brevard, whether it's been as a player, one of Brevard College game announcers, or just a student or classmate here at Brevard. Brady Penn graduated from Brevard College this past spring, which makes him a fresh alum.

Despite his recent graduation, he has been keeping active in the community. Since graduating, Penn has not only joined Georgia's Tech football staff, but is head of his own sports podcast called, "Blitz Sports Media."

He was even hired by WCNN 680 The Fan, one of the largest sports radio networks in the Southeast, as an intern. I sat down with Brady Penn, just to pick his brain a little. I wanted to know how life was going for him since graduating.

Here's how the conversation went:

**Q: How has life been since graduating from Brevard College?**

Brady: Life has been awesome. I spent the summer interning with 680 The Fan, Atlanta's sports radio network. I got to sit in on shows, help edit, attend ball games as a media member

and learn from numerous veterans in the industry. After that, I latched on at Georgia Tech, beginning a new job with the football program.

**Q: What is it like to be living out the dream and being a part of GT staff?**

Brady: It has been an amazing experience so far. Getting to work with players and coaches everyday makes me feel like part of a football team again, even if I'm not playing anymore. The job has already rewarded me with multiple big time connections, my first trip out of the country to Ireland, and entirely new skills working with video technology.

**Q: With one of the biggest wins under GT belt against FSU, can you explain what that whole experience was like?**

Brady: The entire trip to Ireland was incredible. The lead up to the game was lots of fun, as we kept meeting both GT and FSU fans around the city of Dublin, when we would go out on the town.

The game was one of the most fun I've ever experienced in person. A back and forth affair with an electric crowd, and GT winning on a walk-off field goal was perfect. We even got opportunities to hold the trophy on the field after the game. It was a signature win, and was one

of the best trips I've ever been on.

**Q: If there's anything you miss about Brevard what would that be?**

Brady: I definitely miss being around my teammates and friends at Brevard more than anything. The B is such a special place in terms of relationships, and there's definitely times I wanna see my guys and put on the pads with them again. I also miss the adults that helped pave my way in Brevard, especially Coach Khayat, Phil de Montmollin and Ken Tatarzyn from Destiny Church.

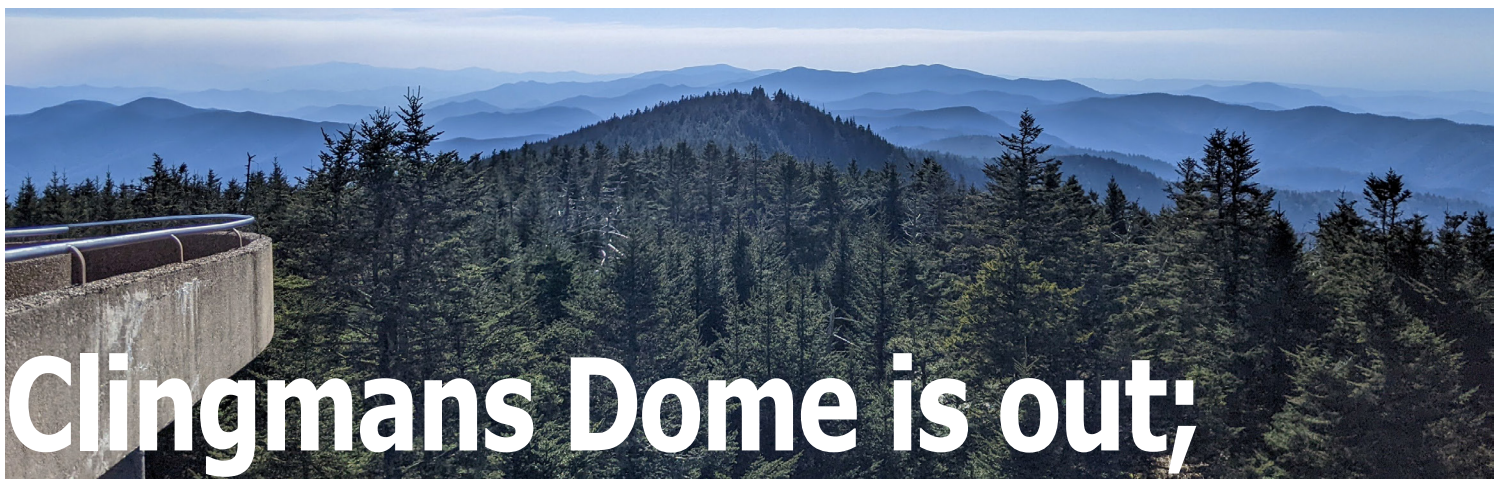
**Q: Is there anything you want to tell the incoming freshman about what to expect going to Brevard for the next three years?**

Brady: I would say just to expect to win, and compete hard every day. Coming in early on, I was lucky to have a great group of veteran guys around me that showed us how things are done at this level.

Hopefully guys my age have done a good job establishing that same standard. The only people that don't make it through with flying colors are the ones who quit. And there might be days where you feel like that is what you want to do. But stick with it, work hard without complaining and be prepared to play your role, whatever it may be.



Brady Penn at the BC graduation in May (left) and at the Georgia Tech-Florida State football Aug. 24 in Ireland (right). (Photo credit: @blpenn\_ on Instagram)



# Clingmans Dome is out;

# 'Kuwohi' is its 'new' name

*U.S. Board of Geographic Names grants Cherokee request to restore their name for the highest peak in the Smokies*

Clingmans Dome, the highest peak in the Great Smoky Mountains and the third highest mountain in the eastern United States, is no more.

Oh, sure, the mountain itself is still there, and it has not been diminished in its height, so far as we know—it still reaches 6,643 feet above sea level, just 41 feet lower than Mt. Mitchell, the highest mountain east of the Rockies.

Rather, it has undergone a name change—or perhaps more accurately, a name restoration, to what the earliest inhabitants of the region knew it as: Kuwohi.

In a press release on Wednesday, the National Park Service said that U.S. Board of Geographic Names voted to change the name of Clingmans Dome to Kuwohi (pronounced koo-WHOA-hee). Kuwohi is the Cherokee name for the mountain and translates to “mulberry place.”

The request to change the name to their original name was formally submitted by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (ECBI), who occupied the region centuries before European settlers arrived in what is now western North Carolina. The peak straddles the state line between North Carolina and Tennessee and is a popular tourist destination for visitors to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

In Cherokee syllabary, the name Kuwohi is ᎠᎵᎩ. The National Park Service strongly supported the name restoration and applauded the decision, which also received support from local communities and governments.

Kuwohi is a sacred place for the Cherokee people and is the highest point within the traditional Cherokee homeland. Kuwohi is visible from the Qualla Boundary, the home of the ECBI. Efforts are already underway to update signage, website and other materials with the Kuwohi name.

“The Great Smoky National Park team was proud to support this effort to officially restore the mountain and to recognize its importance to the Cherokee People,” park superintendent Cassius Cash said in the press release. “The Cherokee People have had strong connections to Kuwohi and the surrounding area, long before the land became a national park. The National Park Service looks forward to continuing to work with the Cherokee People to share their story and preserve this landscape together.”

The proposal was submitted in January of this year by EBCI Principal Chief Michell Hicks following an effort started in 2022 by Lavita Hill and Mary Crowe, both enrolled EBCI members, to restore the traditional name of the summit.

According to the press release, the national park closes Kuwohi for three half days annually to provide access to predominantly Cherokee schools

to visit the mountain and learn the history of Kuwohi and the Cherokee people from elders, Cherokee language speakers, culture bearers and community members.

The mountain became known as Clingmans Dome following an 1859 survey by geographer Arnold Guyot, named for Thomas Lanier Clingman who was a lawyer, U.S. Representative and Senator from North Carolina, and Confederate Brigadier General. But for the Cherokee people, it had always been known as Kuwohi.



TOP: A National Park Service photo of the view from Kuwohi in April 2023. ABOVE: David Martin poses in this 2017 photo beside an Appalachian Trail sign in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The Park Service has begun updating signs in the park to replace “Clingmans Dome” with the mountain’s original name, “Kuwohi.” (Photo by John Padgett)

# Climbing and Anxiety

## Exposure therapy takes to new heights

**Mari Carter**  
Staff Writer

I am absolutely terrified of heights and I am in the fall semester outdoor climbing class! Funny story, I thought I signed up for backpacking and ended up in rock climbing instead. My expectations were quite low.

I was anxious for the whole thing but something about the first day stuck with me.

We all went around and introduced ourselves and even said what b-list superpower we would have. It was fun, I personally picked the ability to speak to animals.

Everyone was so kind and open. I felt welcomed and throughout the safety precautions.

I learned how to practice knots, scaling, etc. I was given patience which I appreciated so much. I feel I am a really slow learner which puts me behind sometimes and often forces me to review through materials taught in class on my own personal time. Which quite frankly is very taxing! So to have that support and care was so helpful and authentic.

We took a ride in our school assigned van to the Nose of Looking Glass. The drive was about thirty minutes which seems long for a class afternoon trip. Everyone however was having fun and making jokes so the drive felt short.

The good thing about everyone getting along so well because in this class it feels like we have each other's back. I suppose it is super fitting for the class considering we are in some cases, going to be harnessed to one another. The whole climbing class is truly centered around climbing safety with an experienced climber present.

To get to the climb we had to hike. We finally made it to where we will be scaling down. Our teacher, Professor David Lackey, set up the climb before we followed behind him. Each of us took our turn and finally it was mine!

Everyone did so well I was nervous, I've never done anything like this and let alone be so high up. The important thing was to ensure you had all weight in your harness, you won't slip if

you do. But to have all weight in your harness scared me I was worried I'd fall right through.

This was troubling and having to look down at my feet to ensure I was not going to trip up on myself was anxiety inducing.

I heard appraisal however, from my professor and classmates which motivated me to just stick it through.

I had a small plunder where I wanted to just walk down but had to remember I was going to scale down with weight in my harness.

Getting over this mental block was really hard for me however I did manage and made it down. It felt nice knowing that hopefully by the end of this whole class I'll actually overcome this fear and also have new friends along the way.

I don't think I could have been able to do this without their support so I'm very appreciative and excited for our next outing.



Previous students in the Wilderness Leadership and Experiential Education outdoor climbing class published in Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine.

# Despite tough loss, Tornados football displays positive play

Abigail Callahan  
Staff Writer

The Brevard College football team began their season on Saturday, Sept. 14 with a tough loss to Hampden-Sydney College. The score was close for most of the game but unfortunately, the Tornados lost with a score of 51-30. Even though the team didn't kickoff with a win, there were highlights from each individual.

Wide receiver and graduate student, Zachary Orr, set a new single-game program record for receiving yards. He finished the game with eight catches for a whopping 205 yards. He had an impressive 83-yard catch and run, breaking

through many defenders' tackles. Running Back Chancellor Lee-Parker delivered an impressive performance, running for 66 yards and setting a new personal single-game career-high by scoring three touchdowns.

The Tornados managed to open the game up with a 79-yard drive. Lee-Parker finished the drive off with a four-yard run giving the Tornados a 7-0 lead just four minutes into the game. Hampden-Sydney stormed back to take a 14-7 lead in the first quarter.

The second quarter ended with Brevard College and Hampden-Sydney tied at 14-14. In a dramatic fourth-quarter comeback, Brevard responded with a safety and a pair of touchdowns

by Chancellor Lee-Parker, with a 30-21 lead.

Hampden-Sydney took the game by storm in the fourth quarter with thirty points. The Tornados were unable to put any more points on the board and lost the first game of the season.

The Brevard College Tornados will face off against Belhaven University of Jacksonville, Mississippi, in an exciting home game on Saturday, Sept. 21. The match is scheduled for a 1 p.m. kickoff at the Ives-Lemel Family Field. Come out and show your support as the Tornados look to continue their impressive season against the visiting team. It's sure to be an action-packed game, and your presence will help boost the team's spirits and energy!



The Brevard College Tornados vs. The Hampden-Sydney Tigers go head to head. Photos by Abigail Callahan

# The Brevard College Womens Volleyball Team

## Brevard College Volleyball: Clinton's Defeat

**Amy Clyburn**  
Copy Editor

The Brevard College Women's Volleyball team won (8-2). The Tornados defeated Clinton College (5-3) in five sets, followed by a four-set win over Toccoa Falls (4-7) to sweep their four games at the two-day non-conference invitational.

With eight wins through the first ten games of the season, it marks the best start for Brevard in the NCAA history of the program. With the two wins, BC extended its win streak to six games, the most consecutive victories since 2012. Brevard College scored 3, and Clinton 2.

The Tornados won their fourth straight five-setter and improved to 5-0 on the year when reaching a fifth set with a victory over Clinton to start the day. Senior Makenna Parkins recorded a match-high 17 kills, while freshman Casey Wampler set a career high with 16 kills, eclipsing her previous high set the night before.

Senior Ashley Hoxit added seven kills, while freshman Emma Fontana delivered six

kills. Freshman setter Izzy Boulay registered a career-high 47 assists, marking the fourth straight match she had 40 or more assists.

Senior libero Bailey Lance led BC with 15 digs to go along with three service aces. Hoxit and Wampler also recorded three aces, while freshman Caroline Moon served two as the Tornados recorded 11 service aces as a team.

Brevard fell behind as Clinton took the first set 25-19. The Tornados answered with a decisive 25-13 second set win followed by a 25-22 victory in set three to take a 3-1 advantage.

Clinton evened the match winning set four 25-21, setting up the definitive fifth set. The two teams traded points to start the fifth and found themselves tied 5-5. With Wampler serving, BC reeled off an 8-0 scoring run to take a 13-5 lead.

A kill from Fontana set up match point as the Tornados took the set 15-17 to win once again in five sets. Brevard 3, Toccoa Falls 1. Playing in their fourth match in less than 20 hours, Brevard took care of business with a four-set win over Toccoa Falls to complete the

weekend sweep.

BC came from behind again after dropping the first set 25-22, winning three straight sets (25-23, 25-17 and 25-20) to take the match. Leading 2-1 in sets and 23-21 in the fourth set, back-to-back kills by Hoxit and junior Jackson Tumicki put away Toccoa Falls for good as the Tornados celebrated a sixth straight victory.

Hoxit was the leading attacker with a match-high 14 kills, while Parkins (10 kills) reached the double-digit kill mark for the fifth time this season. Wampler led all servers with four aces, while Boulay was the top distributor with 30 assists.

Lance (10 digs), Fontana (14 digs) and Boulay (10 digs) led the way defensively to go along with a stellar five blocks by Hoxit.

To follow the latest news and updates surrounding Brevard College Athletics, follow the Tornados on Twitter/Instagram @BCTornados, subscribe to 'Brevard College Tornados' on YouTube and SoundCloud, and follow 'Brevard College Tornado Athletics' on Facebook.



Volleyball vs. Bob Jones (9/10/24) by brevardcollege

By: Caden O'Brien '25