

# South Gibson celebrates Class of 2021 Graduation Ceremony

By Danielle Goodman

Nearly 200 seniors graduated from South Gibson County High School on Thursday night, May 13, at a jam-packed Hornet Stadium. A beautiful sunny day, the evening was just a little brisk as the 173 seniors in the class of 2021 took their stride to the podium and received their hard-earned diplomas.

The ceremony began with Laura Ashley Walker and Megan Emison singing the SGCHS Alma mater harmoniously.

The class Salutatorian, Kaylee Michael, started her speech saying "high school is not meant to be a walk in the park." She talked about her lifetime of hardships. Diagnosed with juvenile arthritis at age three and fibromyalgia at age 17 were especially hard since Kaylee lost her dad to cancer at age nine.

"If I could sum up everything I want to share with you today, it would be that everything goes," Kaylee said. "Without my faith in God and hope in the phrase everything goes, I am not sure what my life would look like right now. With these two anchors, I have been able to carry on and despite life, despite everything that has been thrown in my path. I believe the phrase everything goes can be applied to today's celebration as well. We will have trials. I remind you with the phrase everything goes, that nothing on this earth will last forever. If you find yourself in a rough patch, while adjusting to whatever comes

after tonight, remember my words, everything goes. You have been strong enough to handle what you've had to endure already. Nothing that is thrown at you in life is going to be something we cannot handle. Take comfort in the fact that you are strong enough and everything goes. Cherish what you have and live in the moment."

Anna White, class Valedictorian, plans to attend Mississippi State University and play in the band. Anna began her speech by thanking family, friends and teachers for being there and supporting the entire class through the years.

"To my fellow graduates, thank you for making my high school experience great," Anna said. "I have made such good friends. I will always cherish my memories of my time spent at SGC and it's hard to believe that it's time to say goodbye."

Anna went on to say that even though their senior year was not what they expected, she is glad they were able to persevere through it and still have a great time. Even though the pandemic is coming to a close, she spoke of the uncertainty that each senior is still feeling. Will they find jobs? Will they be able to pay off student loans? And for some comic relief she asked if they would live in their parent's basements forever.

"No matter how daunting or uncertain our circumstances may seem; I believe that our response should remain the same," Anna

said. "We should always strive to love others, work hard, be ourselves and have fun."

Love others. Anna believes, as human beings, this is one of the most important things we can do.

"Treat everyone with kindness and respect, regardless of our differences," Anna said. "Strive to serve instead of being served."

Anna referenced the book of John, chapter 13 from the bible regarding love. Rather than focusing on herself, Anna referred to people she admires and spoke of the qualities those individuals possess. Her first reference was classmate, Morgan Lytle.

"Morgan is one of the nicest people at our school," Anna said. "Rather than getting bogged down in her own situations, she is always reaching out to others, praying for them or offering words of encouragement. The world needs more people like Morgan Lytle."

The next classmate Anna referenced was Dhir Patel.

"As you know, Dhir's family is from India," Anna said. "Being born and raised in the U.S., it would be easy for Dhir to abandon his culture, but he keeps his family's traditions alive. Don't be slighted. Be open to other points of view, the world needs more people like Dhir Patel."

Anna said to work hard. "There is no substitute for hard work," Anna said. "Even when we are tired,

even when we think we have done enough, we have to keep going because it is the only way we will achieve our goals. An example of this is Mason Terry. He works on his paintings for hours at a time and never gives up."

In closing, Anna said to keep working toward your goals and never stop until you achieve them.

"Be yourself," Anna said. "In the age of social media, it can be easy to buy into the trends and follow a crowd. But why fit in when you were born to stand out? We will never be truly happy if we spend all of our time trying to be someone we are not. As we graduate, our futures are wide open. There is no limit to what we might achieve. Remember these five things: Love others, stay faithful, work hard, be yourself and have fun."

After the diplomas were presented, SGC Principal Phil Rogers gave the closing remarks. Mr. Rogers spoke of the potholes in life and how they are always there, but the decision is yours how you handle them when we come across them. Do we pave them or pivot?

The Recessional was played by the SGCHS band as the Seniors made their final walk out of the Hornet's nest. With over 2 million dollars in scholarship award money earned by this class, there is no doubt, they have bright futures ahead of them. Out of 173 students, 29 had 3.9-4.0 grade point average. 15 others maintained a 3.7 to 3.89.



**VALEDICTORIAN** - Anna White gives her valedictorian speech thanking family, friends and teachers for their support over the years Photo by Danielle Goodman.



**"EVERYTHING GOES"** - Salutatorian Kaylee Michael gives her speech on the challenges she's had to overcome to walk the stage at graduation. "If I could sum up everything I want to share with you today, it would be that everything goes," Kaylee said. Photo by Danielle Goodman.



# Wherever YOU GO

GO WITH ALL YOUR  
I heart  
CLASS OF 2021

## Congratulations South Gibson County graduates!



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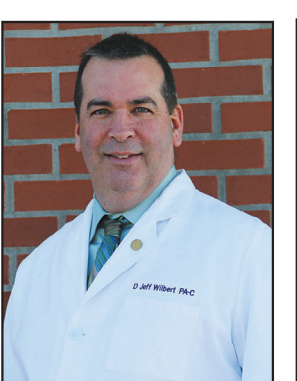
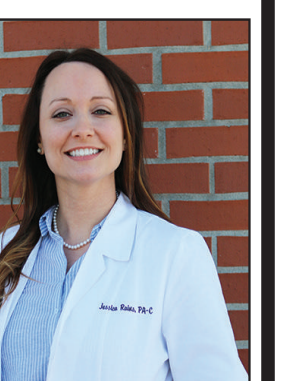
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Congratulations to the  
Senior Class of 2021!

South Gibson Family Care would like to wish all the West TN Graduates prosperity and the best of luck wherever your future takes you! We know you will continue to achieve great things!






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