

After tumultuous year, even Mother Nature can't rain on graduates' parade

Storm pauses commencement ceremony, but can't dampen the spirit of the occasion

By ANNETTE HARVISON
— Herald Staff —

After a year of uncertainty, quarantines, scaled-back activities and wearing masks every day, the Greene County High School Graduating Class of 2021 held a traditional graduation ceremony Friday, May 28, at Johnny Ainsworth Stadium. From a late start to the school year, which pushed graduation back one week, these seniors have put on their best faces every morning and smiled, even behind the masks, through the hallways, in the classrooms and on the sports fields. They held their heads high and took each day at a time, hoping they would be able to end with a bang. These seniors got that moment as 113 went down in the books as the GCHS Class of 2021. It was certainly a memorable time with these seniors showing a little rain on their parade won't stop them from moving forward. From a few drops threatening to halt the events before they got started to a full-on rain shower just a few minutes into their ceremony, they continued after letting the shower pass, wet chairs and all. Reminding them it takes a little rain to make a rainbow and their pot of gold awaits them in their future, a bright

rainbow appeared in the sky. After returning to the field to proceed with their graduation ceremonies, the seniors simply poured the water out of their chairs and kept going. Their show of grace in obstacles speaks volumes for how they will handle their future. The commencement program began with students making their way into the stadium to the traditional tune of "Pomp and Circumstance". Once graduates were in place, Makyah Denson, Rachel Pridgen and Abigail Carney made their way to the podium. Denson spoke to the audience about the symbolism of the American Flag and what it represents to citizens. Pridgen then led classmates and attendees in reciting the "Pledge of Allegiance", which was followed by a lovely performance of "The National Anthem" by Carney. Class President Zayne Robertson approached the podium to welcome those in attendance. Robertson thanked family members and friends, as well as the school faculty and staff, county superintendent and school board for helping he and his classmates meet this milestone in their lives. "This evening is an important milestone for all of us and is filled with many emotions," Robertson added. "Tonight, the Class of 2021 will begin our journey in the real world. We will be receiving our diplomas, the first step on a path which will take us in many different directions." "Over the years, we have

forged friendships that will last some of us the rest of our lives. We have grown together as a class and each one leaving this place a better person for the experiences we have had. We have made our mark at Greene County High School, much different than all the other classes before us, and it is now time for us to make our mark on the world." After the welcome by Robertson, Brittany Brown, Edee Havard, Graceanne Walters and Anna Kate Wood gathered at the podium to share a word of scripture and devotion and lead the stadium in the invocation. The scripture from Romans Chapter 12 was read by Brittany Brown. Havard then shared a few words of devotion based on the scripture. She began by saying that while the scripture was fitting for everyone there, it was especially fitting for herself and her classmates as they embark on a new journey. "First, the verses encourage us not to be conformed to the way of the world," Havard noted. "In this day and time, we face a great deal of uncertainty, and people tend to become anxious, fearful or unsure." "Let us take Paul's advice to heart and be transformed by the renewing of our minds,

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Photo by Annette Harvison / Herald Staff

GCHS graduates are shown (Above) looking for cover at the football field house after a pop-up thunderstorm paused commencement activities at Wildcat Stadium for a few minutes last Friday night. The rain passed and the stars of the show returned to their seats to the applause of friends and family, many of which had weathered the storm from their seats in the bleachers. Shown (Top right) are graduates tossing their caps into the air at the end of the ceremony.

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