

Class of 2026 - Growing into the future

By **LOGAN WATSON**

Four years ago, a group of young kids walked into the front doors of Gibson County High School not knowing what the future held for them.

On Friday night, that group walked out of those doors still not knowing what the future holds, but knowing that they will be able to handle anything that comes their way.

Wyatt Hardin, Vice-President of the Class of 2026, looked back on his years with his fellow graduates and remarked on how much they have changed in just a few short years.

“When we started here, we were literally children,” he said. “I look at your faces, and I can still see the kids that we used to be- nervous and trying to figure out where we fit in. But look at us now. I see adults. I see the future of America. I see future doctors, lawyers, farmers, teachers, pharmacists, mechanics, electricians and so much more.

More importantly, I see generational chains being broken. I see future husbands, wives, fathers and mothers. I see future leaders, heroes and role models. Through the years, we’ve seen each other grow up. We’re completely different people than when we started here. Somewhere during the late nights, early mornings and the days that felt impossible, we grew up.”

Salutatorian Brian Robertson, Jr., asked his fellow graduates to remember the moments that challenged them, because those hurdles made them who they are today.

“High school has taught us all that life rarely fits perfectly into neat categories,” he said. “People are not equations and life is not perfectly organized. Every person sitting here today has a story that doesn’t fit neatly into expectations. That’s what makes this graduating class special. Not because we are perfect, but because we adapt. We learned how to keep moving forward,



VALEDICTORIAN JACK BALL shared memories with his friends before following them into the next chapter of their lives. Photos by Logan Watson.



SALUTATORIAN Brian Robertson, Jr., reminded his classmates that while life often doesn’t go according to plan, it always goes forward.

even when things do not go according to plan. We learned that success does not just about achievement, but about perseverance. Life will continue to surprise us. There will be unexpected opportunities, unexpected setbacks and unexpected versions of ourselves that we have not yet met. We are capable of growing and we are capable of succeeding even when life doesn’t follow the rules we expected it to.”

Class of 2026 Valedictorian Jack Ball thanked everyone that helped him reach this milestone and shared some memories with his friends before closing the another chapter in their lives.

“Today marks one of the greatest accomplishments of our lives, but tomorrow, and every day after, we continue to work and strive to achieve excellence for the lives we are building,” he said. “I challenge you to think of the impact that you want to make and employ the grit the each of us possess to make it.”



ON THE EDGE OF TOMORROW - Members of the Gibson County High School Class of 2026 wait to start the next chapter of their lives. Photos by Logan Watson.



CLASS OF 2026 VICE-PRESIDENT WYATT HARDIN looked forward to the things that his fellow graduates will accomplish in the future and congratulated them on how far they have come since their first day of school at GCHS. Photos by Logan Watson.



PIONEER SCHOLARS - (Above) GCHS Principal Todd Sheppard presented medallions to the school’s top academic achievers during Friday night’s graduation ceremony. Photos by Logan Watson.



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2026! - Follow us on Facebook for more photos, coming soon. Photos by Logan Watson.

Congratulations Class of 2026!

We are so proud of you all. Your future is full of promise and opportunity, and we are looking forward to keeping you connected every step of the way.



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Maddalyn Thompson & Talon Messer and All

2026

Graduating Seniors

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