

Kennedy High School seniors earn diplomas, GEDs

By Caitlyn May
cmay@cg sentinel.com

Megan Minson was told she would not be able to graduate with the class of 2017. On Saturday, she gave a speech on behalf of her Kennedy High School classmates during commencement. Fighting back tears, Minson thanked the teachers that shaped her high school career, instilled in her life lessons and welcomed her with open arms. Because, that's Kennedy.

The presentation of the class skips the generic wave toward the crowd and instead focuses on each individual students. Teachers and faculty line up to introduce a handful of students they have had personal interactions with throughout the school year. They speak to the students' passions and hobbies, their plans and struggles all through tear strained voices and calls for tissue. After a personalized congratulations and a hug, students cross the podium and receive their diplomas.

Thirty-one students settled into the new Delight Valley Gymnasium—what will become the permanent home for future Kennedy students beginning next term—in front of friends and family. Kennedy's class of 2017 worked two jobs, raised children, persevered through hardships and began college and careers armed with GEDs and high school diplomas.

Saturday's ceremony also included distribution of scholarships presented by community leaders including South Lane School Board President Sherri Duerst-Higgins who was in attendance with superintendent Krista Parent, board member Tammy Hodgkinson, board member Gary Mort and Kennedy faculty. Thousands of dollars were awarded to Kennedy students from the Cottage Grove Foundation, Masonic Lodge, Board of Realtors, College Night Oregon, South Lane Cooks Association, Kiwanis, Gear Up, Turn Around and OYCC.

"They're mechanics and Youtube creators," Kennedy Principal Mike Ingman told the crowd, "And we couldn't be more proud of them."

To close out a morning dedicated to the unique students that inhabited Kennedy's home on Taylor Ave. for the last time, there was a song.

Kennedy, which recently dropped the "Alternative" from its official name, educates students who thrive outside of the traditional classroom. Students like Minson who's husband is in the Army and others like Hayden Walker who found Cottage Grove High School counter productive to his learning experience.

While other high school graduates funnel out of their ceremonies to "Pomp and Circumstance," Kennedy students do it a little differently.

Work credits, alternative schedules and programs geared towards GED credits and traditional high school credits are offered throughout the year to students who opt out of Cottage Grove High School.

Staff members David Heritage, Danny Henson and Matt Hall took their positions at the head of the gymnasium, instruments in hand and played the students off. Each verse a personalized tribute to the student and the hope that, as Minson urged in her speech, that they would change the world.

Like the school itself, Kennedy's graduation ceremony is unique.



Kennedy High School students turn their tassle from one side to the other after being presented as graduates from the class of 2017 on Saturday, June 10.

Are you ready? **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

CGPD offers tips on how to stay safe this summer



trians. As a bicyclist; yield to pedestrians, stay to the right of the path and when passing call out "on your left" and pass safely, use marked bike paths or multi-use paths when available, obey vehicular traffic signals and laws on the roadway, use extra caution as you transition between bike paths-road-sidewalks and if there is a bike lane use it. As a driver; yield to pedestrians in crosswalks (failure to do so can result in a presumptive fine of \$260) and at intersections as soon they intend/begin to enter the crosswalk be prepared to stop, be alert of bicyclists-skateboarders-children-animals-elderly, come to a complete stop at multi-lane roads 30 feet before crosswalks, when turning at a signal make sure the pedestrian clears your lane plus 6 feet of the next lane before you can proceed, at any other crosswalk the pedestrian needs to clear your lane plus the next lane before you can proceed and never pass another vehicle that has stopped or is slowing down at a crosswalk. Each month Community Service Officer, Cherie Nelson of the Cottage Grove Police Department will contribute an article on prevention and safety. If there is a topic that you would like more information on please contact her at cnelson@cgpolice.org

As the summer months approach, families will begin to flock to the streets, bike paths and playgrounds but as a community we need to be aware of our surroundings. So when it comes to the rules/laws of crosswalks/bike paths, do you really know what is expected or required of you? As a pedestrian; always cross at marked crosswalks, stay to the right of the path to allow others to safely pass especially cyclists, obey any pedestrian signals and look left-right-left, if a vehicle approaches make eye contact, look before walking by stopped vehicles and remember bicyclists are not generally considered pedes-

Comprehensive family, medical eyecare and optical services



Cataract exams • Glaucoma exams • Lasik exams • Diabetic exams
Serving Cottage Grove Community since 2006

Welcome new patients
Office hours:
Monday thru Thursday 9-5, Friday 9-4
257 N. 8th St. • 541-942-5000
www.PCVI.com

WANTED!
LIVE Yellow Jacket & Hornet Nests
FREE REMOVAL
ALK Source Materials
freebeenestremoval.com
541-510-0191
Insects used for Life Saving Vaccines

8x8x6 \$9.99

BOYCE & SONS

LANDSCAPE AND BUILDING MATERIALS
Open 7 days a week!
7919 N. River Road
541-942-4664

L-HAUL AUTHORIZED DEALER

PUT TOGETHER A PLAN

Make sure all the pieces are in place to render you and your family prepared in the event of a natural disaster.

- Listen to radio or television newscasts for the latest weather information, and follow all evacuation directions and suggestions.
- Keep a stock of non-perishable food items as well as bottled water on hand inside your home.
- Keep a 72 Hour Kit on hand inside your home that is easy to get to in the event of a disaster.

For more information and tips on disaster response and preparedness, contact your local emergency services center.
South Lane Fire & Rescue • 233 Harrison Ave, Cottage Grove 541-942-4493 • 55 South 1st Street, Creswell 541-895-2506

Twitter: @southlanefire
Facebook: southlanecountyfireandrescue