

CGHS from A1

also retiring, Ingman stated, "She's probably the most intelligent, most diligent person I've ever met." While thanking teachers for their hard work, Ingman also acknowledged students for having the power to teach in their own right. "The students who are graduating here today have taught me a lot and this is why, this morning, I woke up with a heavy feeling of sadness," he said, "but also a feeling of great joy because the people that have taught me so much are going out into the world to teach other people as well." On this point, Ingman talked of students who taught and exemplified perseverance, ambition and positivity. Lastly, he thanked families of the students.



DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Members of the Cottage Grove High School graduating class of 2019 toss their caps skyward after the completion of Saturday's ceremony, which included nearly 150 students and hundreds of family, friends and past graduates.

"It could not be said enough how much you're appreciated and how important you are to the lives of our graduates," he said. Student body president Keely Galbreath then took the podium to express how she and her classmates should appreciate how far they've come and value the connections they've made. "Take ownership of that and be proud of the work that you've put in," she said. Valedictorians Irene Nichols-Ferguson and Kenzie Parsons stepped up to deliver speeches next. Nichols-Ferguson spoke of the graduates' next task of forging their futures. "No one can tell you what to do with your future. Not pushy parents or online quizzes," she said. "You have to find your own future in your own

way. And that is by finding something that you are truly, deeply, passionate about. ... As long as you find your passion and chase it, the world will be easier to conquer than you might be expecting." Next, Parsons reflected on the paths that brought them to that day. "Each and every one of us has gone through so many different trials and tribulations to get here, but each of them has made us stronger," she said, encouraging her classmates to maintain a positive outlook as they enter adulthood. "If we all choose to have this mindset and make the best out of every

situation, we're going to continue living prosperous lives." Salutatorians Samantha May and Alexandra Istudor spoke next. May addressed the daunting task of finding joy and direction for youths after graduation. "There are no instructions now and, as scary as that can be, it's also exciting," she said. "The possibilities are endless for us, but nothing is worth doing that doesn't bring you joy. Find what sparks joy inside of you and don't ever let it go." Lastly, Istudor weighed the significance of the camaraderie afforded to

her and her classmates through their academic lives. "School has given us a chance to meet and interact with people we would have otherwise gone our entire lives without knowing," she said. "The opportunity we've had to get to know each other — to turn complete strangers into best friends — has been the most worthwhile

practice in this chapter of our experience." Istudor also spoke on the preciousness of life. "See what we possess in this life for the treasure that it is and never hold back the will to be the change you wish to see," she said. Turning to her classmates, Istudor ended by wishing them bright futures.

"We are the movers and shakers of our generation. We are the circle in the square. We are the ones we have been waiting for," she said. Graduates were then handed their diplomas and, after the ceremonial turning of tassels, caps were released to a field full of applause.

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Congratulations Class Of 2019!

the Cottage Bowl

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Wed 3:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Thu 1:00 pm – 9:00 pm
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