

Chalkboard

By

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With all that comes with change, it is sometimes reassuring to have some things remain constant. One thing I always count on is a fast, action-packed, last two or three weeks of the school term. Last week four major events, that I enjoy each year, occurred.

The first was the GHS Scholarship Committee's annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony held last Monday night at the GMS/GHS Cafeteria. If you should not be familiar with this event, it is a time when certain graduating seniors are recognized and awarded various scholarships. These scholarships are given by local and area business, individuals, colleges and universities, the branches of the armed services, high school organizations, memorials, and the from funds solicited by the Scholarship Committee. All told, I understand the total offered was approximately \$400,000.

The next event happened the next night at the high school auditorium when the different levels of bands, Beginning, Middle, and High School, gave their yearly spring concert. While I have to confess that the only instrument that I can play is a radio, I always enjoy hearing the students perform works that obviously have complex movements. Even a man who cannot carry a tune in a pail could appreciate Swearingen's *The Light Eternal*.

Then Thursday night I had the pleasure of hearing our various school choirs perform also at the auditorium. The students proved that they could not only sing but could also carry on like troopers when they had some technical problems early on with some of the sound equipment. The different soloists were great and the grand finale of "Made In The USA" complete with choreography, made me think I had been transported to Broadway.

With rain threatening, Friday found both the Primary and Intermediate School students at Pioneer Stadium having their respective Annual Track and Field Days. If you have never attended this happening with your elementary child, you should. You can boost your energy level just by walking across the football field and soaking up the excitement radiating off the students as they scramble from one event to another.

Allow me to take a moment here and just say "Thanks" to all the parents in the different school support groups whose countless hours and

efforts allow us to do things for our students that we could not do otherwise. You know who you are and I hope you are aware of how vital your work is in having extraordinary athletic, academic, and activity programs.

I realize that in recent years the pendulum of education has swung hard to academia. Our school district is judged not on whether the Middle School Band can perform Edmondson's *Silvergate Overture* but rather their individual scores on the Benchmark Exams. We are not judged on whether the High School Choir can sing *Johnny Angel* but rather how well those same students will score on the state's End-Of-Course Exams. Nor will it matter to the creators of *No Child Left Behind* who won the milk carton water relay race at T&F Day.

But I say that all these things and all the athletic banquets and FFA Banquets and students making it to the State Track Meet and the new Multicultural Soccer squads and faculty-student volleyball and high school yearbooks and dances at the middle school and fast pitch softball and elementary variety shows and field trips and proms and so on and so on and so on are also valid ingredients in the great mix of things that comprise a school term.

So have we stopped having school and started "playing"? Absolutely not. Are we putting on public display the results of hard work and repeated practice and having some fun doing it? Absolutely yes.

Consider this a personal invitation to the next major event after this article is published. The Seniors of Gentry High School will have their graduation ceremony this Saturday, May 21st, at Pioneer Stadium at 10:00 a.m. In case of rain, graduation will be held in the high school gymnasium. Either way the occasion is the highlight of every school year. Come share our celebration.