



## **Excerpt from the Mayor's speech to the Bawlf High School Class Farewell May 16, 2009**

Honoured grads, guests, faculty, staff, ladies and gentlemen: it is my pleasure to bring you greetings from Village of Bawlf Council and Administration. The Village of Bawlf is very pleased with the relationship that has evolved between the Village of Bawlf and Bawlf School over the past year-and-a-half but, of all the things that we do collaboratively, speaking at the class farewell is my absolute favourite. This is because this is a truly unique and special day in your lives and it is a joy to share it with you. You will have no other like it, a fact that becomes more apparent in retrospect over the years to come. I am truly privileged to be a part of it.

...You will go out into the world, honoured grads: some of you will stay close to here, but others will move to cities, to other provinces, and even to other countries. And when you leave here, you will live your lives according to a set of values that you have garnered from this place: this school, this community, and what my friend, Ken, likes to call "the rural". Your lives will be based on solid values such as a sense of neighbourliness, community spirit, a deep and abiding appreciation of the land, and a simple joy in family life.

You will live according to these values and those around you will often think of you, as they did of Don Quixote, as being mad for holding onto values that are too idealistic and out of touch. But make no mistake about it: it is you, honoured grads, who will be shining beacons of lucidity, and of sanity, and of decency in a world that has itself seemingly gone mad. It is each and every one of you who will set the example for others to follow because of the values by which you live.

However, unlike Don Quixote, you won't find yourselves on your deathbed renouncing all those values as madness.

So Godspeed, honoured grads, as you set out into the world and do the things you were meant to do and be the people you were meant to be. Remember that you will always be a part of this school and this community but, more importantly, remember that this school, this community, and rural Alberta will always be a part of who you are.

God bless you as you move on to the next phase of your lives and thank you again for allowing the Village of Bawlf and me to be a part of this very special day.

