



Tusker Nation

SOMERS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS
FOR SCSD FAMILIES

□ **Congratulations Class of 2022** □



The Class of 2022 graduated on Wednesday, June 22 on the main field at Somers High School. Congratulations to all of the graduates. Somers is proud of you!



Great ideas **STEM**med from library media lessons at Primrose. Using straws, Tetragrams, magnets, Brain Flakes, blocks, and their imaginations, students got to work in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math to develop some great creations.



June is the month for awards ceremonies, concerts and year-end performances, including the district Stringstravaganza, which is a collaboration between student musicians from elementary to high school. There was also the high school fashion show and arts awards, the **high school concert**, the middle school concert, and events at both elementary schools. Our students work hard and the results are impressive. Visit the **SCSD Facebook page** for more videos and events.



Third graders in Melissa Barcia's class got a lesson in tie-dye from Somers alum Jordan Baker, owner of the Brown Dyed Girl in Somers.

Baker showed the kids how to roll, tie and dye the shirts they then wore on Field Day. Baker opened her high end tie-dye shop in Baldwin Place in the fall.



Bateman Wins UN Essay Contest

Ryan Bateman's personal reflection on change and adaptability resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic and shutdown earned him a top spot in the United Nations Association of Westchester's 2022 Media Contest. The seventh grader's essay, "The Pandemic", was chosen as one of the top three winning essays based on the 2022 theme: *Adjusting, Adapting and Improving*. "I noticed how a lot of things changed during the pandemic," Bateman said. "People had to think more, gain more knowledge and learn the technology for things like online school and work." He also highlighted that his family was able to eat dinner together more often as a result of the pandemic.

A Day of Fowl Play



Sophomore Jason Ferrara experiences some chicken therapy with celebrity fowl.

It was the first annual Chicken Day for Biology students at Somers High School. This unofficial celebration of all things chicken piggybacked on the hatching of more than a dozen new chicks in the science department earlier this month.

Science students in Emily Gilsean, Christine Lepkowksi, Dawn Kessler, and Danielle Pizzuto's classes rotated through three chicken-related stations that included circle time with the recently hatched chickens, testing out the strength of eggs, and spending time with some unique local celebrity chickens out on the lawn. Students learned about the strength of an egg and that it takes 100 pounds of pressure to break one. They tried unsuccessfully to break the egg with pressure between their fingers and then squeeze it in their hands.

But the special guests of Chicken Day were the "Chickens with Attitude" also known as Goth Christopher, the Mayor, and Christopher Christopher belonging to Karen Finnegan of Beacon, NY. Part therapy chickens, but mostly celebrity chickens, these friendly fowl spent time being cuddled by, and perching on, willing students and staff.

Sophomore Jason Ferrara went from never having held a chicken to hosting three who sat on his head, knee, and arm. He said the experience was perfect. "I could see how having them around could make someone feel optimistic," he said.

Finnegan brings her therapy/celebrity chickens to various organizations and events in the area including schools, sporting events, and festivals to bring awareness of her small, enchanting group of domesticated fowl. She uses humor and friendship to introduce people to these friendly creatures including one special chicken named Jolene who can't run or fly. She is the subject of Finnegan's book "Jolene the Disability Awareness Chicken" about Jolene and her sister Christopher who help inspire children to embrace what is special and different in each other.

Primrose Elementary School students also shared in the joy of Chicken Day. The Somers High School science teachers and students greeted some first and second graders from Crystle Regulbuto's first and second-grade Flex Class. They walked over to meet Finnegan and her chickens and hear Finnegan read from her book and partake in the egg-breaking challenge.

D'Ippolito Player of Year

Senior Daniel D'Ippolito has been named the Gatorade New York Boys Soccer Player of the Year - the first to be chosen from Somers High School. The mid-fielder and member of the State Championship team was chosen for his academic and athletic achievements, as well as his exemplary character demonstrated on and off



the field. D'Ippolito will play soccer at Fordham University this fall.

Signed, Sealed, and Delivered



Primrose postal workers celebrate a successful year of mail delivery after a two-year hiatus.

After a very busy year, the Primrose Elementary School's Wee Deliver Post Office closed for the season this week. The final group of second-grade mail handlers, sorters, and mail carriers performed their duties and received their certificates congratulating them on a job well done.

Since the opening in the fall, the 160-second graders took two-week turns during recess collecting, sorting, and delivering mail to places like Big Top City, ABC, and Tuskertown – the school's kindergarten, first, and second-grade classroom addresses as well as to mailboxes located outside specials classrooms and other places throughout Primrose.

Hundreds of letters were written by students and staff and hand-delivered by the eager second-grade post office workers. And while they got a taste of other duties in a post office setting such as sorting and stamping, delivering mail to classrooms was the hands-down favorite.

"I really liked delivering the letters the best, especially to Big Top City," said Jaslin Alonzo.

"I liked delivering the mail for the second graders in Tuskertown but I am going to miss delivering mail to my brother who is in kindergarten," said Marcella Chiazzeze.

Ava Kan said the Kindergarteners loved to get mail. "They liked getting their own mail, but they also looked forward to seeing us delivering the mail," Kan said.

Teaching Assistant Gail Weiner, who has been running the Wee Deliver Post Office for many years, said the post office is a very positive experience for the second graders. "They do many jobs and learn to work together," she said and added that students learn about responsibility.

This year, Weiner said, the Wee Deliver Post Office saw more mail than ever, likely because the post office wasn't open for the last two years. That resulted in this year's second graders working extra hard to learn the delivery routes and find places they may not have been before.

Singing to Honor Asian Pacific Islander Heritage



The middle school chorus learns a song in Japanese to celebrate Asian Pacific Islander month. Click [here](#) to listen.

Members of the seventh and eighth-grade chorus had a big challenge in front of them – not only learning a new song, but learning a new song in Japanese. After more than five weeks of practice, the students were confident enough to perform the Japanese folk song "Akatonbo" in a mini-concert in the main hallway to honor Asian and Pacific Islanders Heritage Month in May.

Chorus teacher Marie Williams had faith that her students would have no problem learning a song in a foreign language. "I chose this song at the beginning of the year because it is a partner song (two separate melodies that are sung together to create harmony), which is typically easily attainable," Williams said. "I wanted something that the students would be able to quickly achieve, yet also be challenged. The challenge was the language. We sang the melody first using "loo", and we would speak the words often in rhythmic time, then we married the two together."

Eighth-grader Hayley Mueller said learning the Japanese folk song was easier than she had imagined. "The pronunciation was a little hard to learn but we could recognize some of the words right away," Mueller said. "Learning to sing in another language makes us better singers."

Mia Plugh, who is fluent in Japanese, grew up hearing "Akatonbo" sung to her by her mother. Plugh, who is in eighth grade, was happy to help her fellow chorus members work on sounds and words and was thrilled her teacher picked this somewhat challenging song to celebrate Asian and Pacific Islanders Heritage Month.

"Ms. Williams likes to give us a challenge with the songs she picks out for us," Plugh said. "She likes to challenge us with different languages."

A Year of Advocacy and Accomplishments



Student government members at the intermediate school enjoy some ice cream to celebrate the change they affected and the causes they supported.

Members of the Somers Intermediate School Student Government have had quite a busy year advocating for changes and improvements to their school community, raising awareness for issues like childhood cancer, and collecting donations to send to troops overseas.

Their list of undertakings is diverse and students are proud of what they've accomplished this year. The 26 third, fourth, and fifth graders celebrated with an ice cream social this week.

For their school community, the student government approached Principal Liz Turner and Assistant Principal Linda Belger with ideas to bring back flexible seating in the classrooms, replace the basketball hoop on the playground, clean the trails in the back of SIS, and address the noise level issue in the school hallways with their peers. Additionally, the students advocated for new recess equipment and generated a list of ideas for indoor recess activities.

One area where they also focused their efforts was on school climate and inclusion. They held a Hanukkah Happiness Day and encouraged their classmates to wear blue to support those who celebrate the Jewish tradition of Hanukkah. Additionally, the SIS community held a Holiday Happiness Day before winter break and asked classmates to express the holiday they celebrate with clothing, hats, or specific colors.

On the philanthropic front, the student government spearheaded a Halloween Candy Drive and gathered 42 boxes of candy to send to troops overseas through United For Troops. In the winter, a Holiday Family Fundraiser Raffle of Apple Air Pods generated \$923 and helped two Somers families in need. Students also organized a Used Book Sale and they donated the \$1,300 in proceeds to St. Jude's Children's Hospital and Team SEAS. SIS also supported St. Jude's Math-a-thon and encouraged their peers to attend this math event at Somers High School in the spring. They collected coins to support Relay for Life and hope to donate nearly \$740 for Gabby Sullivan's Relay For Life team.

Student Government President, fifth-grader Matthew Ringer, said he was most proud of getting the new basketball hoop installed after spring break. "The kids were really excited about it," he said. "We were able to get it done by communicating our needs to Mrs. Turner and Mrs. Belger."

Vice President and fifth-grader Marco Pomponi said the best student government includes kids who are willing to work, and he has some advice for students who want to join.

"You need to be willing to work hard and take charge when needed," Pomponi said.



The Somers SEPTA and PTA Council award ceremony was held on June 13. This was the 13th Annual SEPTA Awards and the third year of the Tusker Award. For the first time in three years, the ceremony was held in person. It was a special evening filled with laughter and tears of joy as we honored these wonderful educators. The honorees were: Joan Cass (Award of Excellence), Anne McGuire (Sherri Mangus Award of Merit), Valerie Bloom (Making the Difference Award), and Barbara Bird (TUSKER Award). These educators are recognized for their dedication, enthusiasm, commitment, devotion, and limitless belief in the potential of all students. We thank all our wonderful educators!

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