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The Israel-Hamas War



By Sofia Mendoza
Tusker Tribune Staff

This past Saturday, a war between Hamas and Israel started.

You might wonder why so suddenly a war has occurred. Well, on Saturday morning, a group of Hamas fighters launched a surprise attack by sea, land, and airstrikes on Israel, killing about 1,200 innocent people and taking about 100 or more hostages.

In retaliation, Israel then declared war on Hamas and began attacking them. Israel turned off the power, water, and fuel they provide to Gaza until the hostages have been safely returned, and have launched many aerial strikes on Gaza as they attempt to wipe out Hamas militants, who live in that area. This has led to a lot of innocent Palestinians living in Gaza being killed as well.

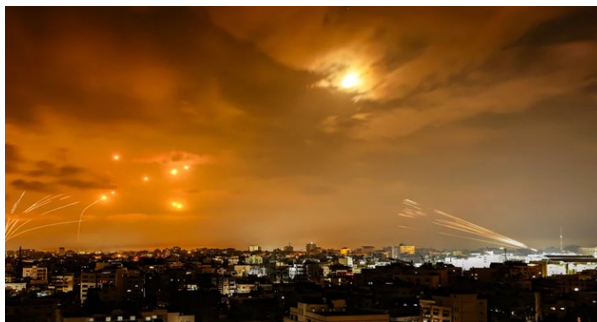
Unfortunately, most of the victims on both sides of the war have been innocent women and children. This is the deadliest attack that Israel has faced in decades. Although tensions and at-

tacks between Israelis and Palestinians have been common in this region for many years, it has never escalated to a full-on war.

For decades, Israel, the world's only Jewish state, and Palestine, a majority Muslim state, have been fighting for the land in the area, as both sides consider it rightfully their land and consider the other unwanted inhabitants of the land. Tensions rise so high that even though they have tried to share the land in the past, it has never been completely peaceful.

Whether you are pro-Israel or Pro-Palestine, it is important to note the loss of so many innocent lives and be respectful of the loss of human life on both sides. Families have been destroyed, homes turned into rubble, and many children like us are now suffering and struggling to survive instead of going to school, playing and being with their families, like us.

We should be thankful that we live in Somers, but also think about others around the world who aren't so lucky. More reports to come in the following weeks as the war continues.



An 8th Grader Discusses the 6th and 7th Grade Experiences



By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff

Your first year of middle school can be scary and intimidating but it's actually quite the opposite! 6th grade was a super fun year filled with cool field trips, projects, and fun teachers! In social studies you get to do tons of group projects.

You also get to act like you're in a court room and debate. In science you will do hands-on experiments, and you even get a chance to make a volcano! The best advice I could give to a sixth grader is to not stress too much about your grades and to try to talk to and meet new people.

7th grade was my personal favorite of my two years in middle school so far. The field trips we went on were to the Bronx Zoo and Quassy Amusement Park. We went to the Bronx Zoo in April, and it was great! We got to choose our groups and see all the animals. However, my



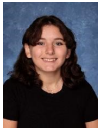
favorite field trip of the two was Quassy. You get the most freedom on this trip. You can go wherever you'd like (for the most part) and hang out with whomever you want! You don't need to stay with a teacher the whole time (you check in at certain times) and you can choose whether you want to go to the water park, or the amusement park, or even both.

My best advice for a new 7th grader would be to enjoy it and stay out of drama.

Reporters/Contributors

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A Student's Take on the IB Learner Program



**By Lauren Crispino
Tusker Tribune Staff**

We all have heard about the IB learner profiles, traits, attributes, and all of it. Even if you're just starting 6th grade or are already an 8th grader, like me, you know all about what it means to be an IB learner. But why does our school take part in this program, and what are the benefits and downfalls to it in terms of student stress and workload, and if it helps us learn better?

First, before we get into all of that, what is IB and why do we have it in our school? IB, also known as International Baccalaureate, is a program meant to help students learn better in real-world situations.

The IB, or Middle Years program (MYP) learner profiles are meant to show needed attributes to succeed in workplaces and to properly view the world around us. But the MYP profiles are just one part of the program. The bulk of it is the work we do in classes. For example, in science classes, when we write learning targets, it's meant to show our goal and purpose and focus for learning the things we currently being taught.

I think you all get the point on what the IB



program is, so I'm not going to lecture you on it more. Onto some of the main pros and cons, Coming from an 8th-grade student here at SMS:

Pros:

- Better understanding of what we learned
- Shows us why we are learning certain things (even if it is worded unusually)
- Provides certain goals, and helps us know if we have achieved them

Cons:

- The workload is crazy, especially as an 8th grader who is already practicing the transition to high school. The work in our normal classes like science, social studies, Spanish, ELA, and math is already a lot, but it's even more when taking advanced classes, band, chorus, or orchestra, and participating in school clubs and extracurriculars. I've noticed even in the past month that a lot of students seem more stressed than before.
- The grading scale is extremely harsh, unless we are just reading into it wrong. When teachers say something is graded on the MYP scale, we have no idea what it means even remotely.

Those are the main pros and cons of the IB learner program. Thanks for reading!

Time for a Longer Lunch Period?



**By Tara Goodwin
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Why do we have only 20 minutes to just eat our lunch? By the time you walk down all the stairs to get to the cafeteria, you only have approximately 15 minutes. That is only if the lunch line is not long. That rarely happens.

If the lunch line is long, then it is 12 minutes to eat lunch. I feel bad for all those people in that long lunch line, and I have already finished my lunch! That is not enough time.

Plus, just because you want to buy lunch should not mean you have to be punished with shorter lunch times due to the wait.

What about recess? After sitting for awhile, you need to get up, move around and have an enjoyable time with friends. Twenty minutes isn't enough time. If we get a longer time at recess, that means more time to socialize with friends. That means a better social life. Let's be honest who doesn't want a great social life?

With our constantly changing schedules, having a longer break at lunch makes sense. A lot of kids agree with me. So would it be extremely hard to just add another five minutes to each half of the lunch period?



The Pumpkin Patch



**By Natalie Snyder
Tusker Tribune Staff**

It was a cold, windy day. It was OCTOBER 1ST! This means spooky season has started—pumpkin patches, candy, scary movies and more.

Three friends wandered to a basement and "BOO!"

"MARLA, I THOUGHT I SAID NOT TO SCARE YOUR SISTER AND HER FRIENDS!" mom yelled from upstairs.

"SORRY MOM!"

The frigid air hit my face as I walked through the door. "Here's the laundry, ma," I said as I walked into the laundry room.

"Thank you, sweetie. Now what did I tell you? Do not bother your sister. Thank you," she said as I walked up the stairs to my room.

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A Pastry for a Halloween Treat? Yep!



**By Josie Wilkinson
Tusker Tribune Staff**

Have you ever been trick or treating, and someone gave you a pastry? Learn more about the history of Halloween in this article and it might make sense!



Halloween, or, as people first called it, "All Hallows Eve," was first started around two thousand years ago, according to most scholars. It is the night before All Saints Day. Halloween is full

of traditions like trick or treating and wearing costumes. Have you ever thought about why you do those things?

Here is why we wear Halloween costumes. Halloween celebrated the end of harvest and the start of a new year in a festival named Samhain. At that festival, villagers built bon fires and wore animal heads/skins. This may be where the tradition of Halloween costumes originated.

Another possibility is that it is because people believed that ghosts came back to the earth on Halloween, and they would see the ghosts if they left their homes. People would wear masks when they left their homes after dark to avoid being recognized as human by spirits. Now you know two theories on why people first wore Halloween Costumes.

There are a few theories why we trick or treat. One theory is that the Celts would leave food out to satisfy spirits that travel at night during Samhain (which was when the line between living and dead was thin). As The Origins of Halloween Traditions by Heather Thomas says, "Over time, people began to dress as these unearthly beings in exchange for similar offerings of food and drink."

Another theory is that because of a German-American Christmas tradition, kids would wear costumes and call on neighbors and they would have to guess which kid was in the costume. If the kid could trick everybody, then the kid would get a treat.

A third theory is that it is because in England, there was an All Souls Day parade. At the parade, poor people would beg for food and families would give them pastries called "soul cakes" if they promised to pray for their dead relatives. Let's hope that we all get candy and not one of those!

Now, some fun facts!

- Did you know that candy corn's original name was "chicken feed" and that people did not start giving candy out to trick-or-treaters until the 1950s?
- The record for fastest carved pumpkin is 16.47 seconds. Do you think you could beat it?
- Also, in Germany, it is tradition for people to hide their knives on Halloween night so returning spirits do not get injured. Apparently, no one is worried about accidentally finding it the hard way.

I hope you enjoyed reading my article and that you have a spooky Halloween!



My sources:

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SMS's STAR Students For September 2024

Grade 7:



Dana Castillo



Jack Hennigan



Keziah Ferry



Marco Pomponi

Grade 8



Xavi Dosil

A STAR award stands for STUDENTS who Are Role models. The students pictured here were caught doing something that deserves the STAR recognition for the month—from common courtesy, to helping another student or staff member, to standing up for someone or cheering them up!

The Pumpkin Patch

From page 2

I open my bedroom door and jump right into bed. I pulled out my phone to see eight missed calls and 10 texts all from Lila. The text read, "where are you? You said you would be here. MARLA where are you? I am all alone, so come on!" and so many more. I text back, "I'm on my way right now."

"NO! HOW COULD I FORGET THE CARNIVAL IS TODAY!"

I ran downstairs and my feet slipped on the way down. "Where are you off to sweetie, in such a hurry?"

"The carnival, ma. I got to go. I feel so stupid I left Lila all alone," I say back.

"I'm sure Lila's fine sweetie," Ma says as I walk out the front door. I grabbed my pink bike and raced down the street to the field where they're hosting the carnival. As I pull into the parking lot, I see the lights light up as the sunset hits. Everything just feels right until . . . Lila starts screaming my name. "MARLA COME OVER HERE!"

"I'M COMING!" There's Lila with her blonde hair up in two braids and black shorts and a t-shirt. As I walk over there, my nerves start running though my body like ice slipping down my back. I hate scary movies, but I should have thought about that before I agreed to go the Spooky Halloween Carnival with Lila.



Then as I come up to Lila, I lock eyes with a man with a chainsaw chasing people through the pumpkin patch. This sends chill down my

spine . . .

PART TWO

. . . as it rides down my spine, Lila starts shaking me. "HELLO MARLA. HELLO!" she says.

"Oh, sorry Lila. I must have zoned out."

"It's ok. Just stop doing that. Now come on and go on the swings with me."

"OK," I say back. We head over to the swings, handing the workers our tickets as we enter and pick a swing. I sit on the outside of the swing. I can see something in the bushes next to the gates and see the man again. The chills run up my spine. I thought everything was just in my head. Oh, was I wrong.

Unity Day is Wednesday, October 18



By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff



Every October, thousands of students, faculty, and community members throughout the nation, and even the world, take action to prevent bullying. October is National Bullying Prevention Month, and on the third Wednesday, Unity Day is held. Unity Day is the main event of National Bullying Prevention Month and was established in 2006 by "PACER'S National Bullying Prevention Center". People recognize the day through wearing and sharing orange. People demonstrate their support for kindness and acceptance, as well as their reluctance for bullying.

SMS celebrates Unity Day in different ways. One of those ways was "Project Connect". Last Year in Advisory, all students participated in this project. The project is used to create a visual statement for Unity Day. In Project Connect, students write a message on an orange strip of paper. The paper links are then connected to create one long chain to visually represent uniting for a common cause.



An 'Immaculate' Read



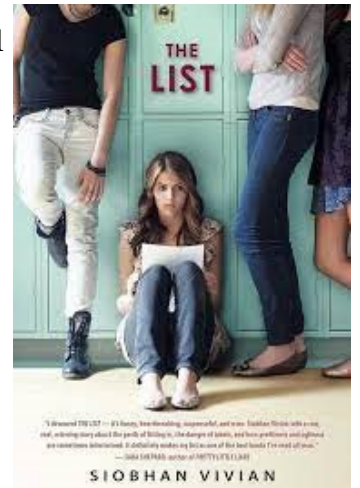
By Ava Schmidberger
Tusker Tribune Staff

The List, a novel by Siobhan Vivian, is an immaculate book! It shows the points of views from 8 different teenage girls in high school. The 8 girls were recently put on "The List", which is a list that comes out every year naming the ugliest and prettiest girls in each grade.

The book shows the thoughts and feelings of both the girls named "prettiest" and the girls named "ugliest". No matter what name

they fell under, they were judged and stared at. The book shows girls that it doesn't matter how the world sees them, but what does matter, is how they see themselves.

I would recommend this book to anyone who likes Jenny Han (known for "The Summer I Turned Pretty" and "To All The Boys Who I Loved Before"). Personally, I would rate the book a 9.5/10. I think while it may not completely accurately describe the teenage girl experience, it brings awareness to problems that are in the world.



Ranking the Days (Daze?) of the Week!



By Leo Mundis
Tusker Tribune Staff

Many tend to forget what day it is during the summer break, but since we've been in school for quite a while, we know what day it is when we wake up. But sometimes, people don't want to wake up. These times almost always fall on a Monday. Of course, you must go back to school or work after a weekend, and you won't get those two days of bliss for another five huge days. But...

Is Monday that bad?

Well, in truth, while Monday isn't great, it truly isn't as bad as everyone says. You are (hopefully) well-rested from the weekend, your teacher or employer won't be as hard on you compared to other days, and it's only the first day back. It's not like you've been working seven days straight!

After that, Tuesday

While Monday gets too much hate, Tuesday doesn't get enough. All the dreadful things of Monday are carried on to Tuesday, but this time, teachers won't be as easy on you, one day is gone but four remain, and you are already quite tired from Monday. According to a study on stress levels, Tuesdays hit the worst ([Click Here](#)). The only thing good is that productivity can be at a high.

What about Wednesday?

Wednesday is quite the opposite of Tuesday. People start to get happy, for the weekend is within arm's reach. However, productivity is incredibly low on this day since everybody's distracted and happy.

Onto Thursday

Surprisingly, though, Thursday is getting closer to the weekend. It seems almost as bad as Tuesday. This could be because it feels like forever until the weekend, and while Wednesday is the be-

ginning of the end, Thursday just feels like a drag. However, one upside is that success feels even sweeter at the end of the week, notably this day.

Who Doesn't Love Friday?

Closer than Thursday, people are just as happy as Wednesday, and you can smile when you get home? Obviously, Friday is the happiest, most popular day of not only the work/school week, but maybe even the entire one. However, on the productivity side, Friday is terrible. Nobody can resist looking at the clock, and barely any work gets done while the minutes pass by. Still, though, TGIF!

The Weekend

A lot of us know that Saturday feels vastly different from Sunday, although you have school and work off both days. Saturday is a cheerful, sleep-in, go to bed late day, but half of Sunday is spent worrying about the week.

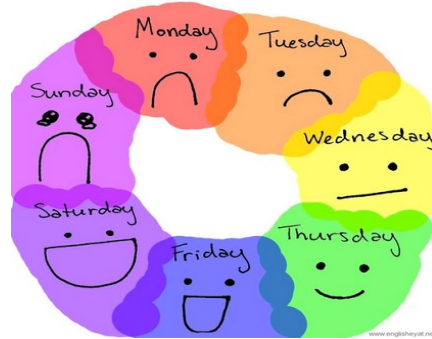
Conclusion

While some days are better than others, what's best is just to keep moving forward, no matter what day of the week it is (I'm still going to rank them. Please note that the happiness scores are mostly arbitrary and based off my personal experience, studies on happiness and stress levels, as well as productivity):

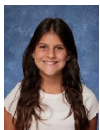
- Saturday: 9.7/10
- Friday: 9.2/10
- Sunday: 7.4/10
- 4th Wednesday: 7/10
- 5th Monday: 6.1/10
- 6th Thursday: 5.8/10
- Last Place: Tuesday: 4.9/10

Works Cited

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October's a Special Month



By Allison Cardillo
Tusker Tribune Staff

October is a great time of the year. The fall colors are beautiful and there are many fall harvest festivals.

Halloween is the most popular celebration. Halloween is fun for kids, adults and even pets to get dressed up. Halloween is always celebrated on October 31 and it's an observance rather than a holiday. With Halloween comes carnivals, candy, pumpkins, costumes, witches, black cats and pranks.

Is a pumpkin a fruit or vegeta-



ble? Well, if you said fruit, you're right. While the orange gourds look like vegetables, they start as a flower and have seeds which classify them as a fruit.

Do you like any corn? It became popular in the late 1800s. Whether you love it or hate it, the sugary sweet treat became a Halloween staple in the 1950s.

Columbus Day is a national holiday always the second month of October, so this year it is Monday October 9th. Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day commemorates the voyage and landing of Italian explorer Christopher Columbus in the New World on October 12, 1492.